

Presented to the Salvation Army
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Paul G. Krentz.

The Lord's Prayer



William Ballmann



SECOND EDITION



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To
Emmanuel, Baltimore,
Redeemer, New York City,
Mount Olive, Milwaukee,
Who have listened to these Sermons,
This Volume
Is affectionately dedicated
By their Pastor and Friend

Foreword.

Unable to find a book on the Lord's Prayer suitable for English Lutherans, the Author, in 1888, tried to fill the want he felt and printed his efforts in the "Lutheran Witness," 1900—1902. Upon request of the President and Publication Board of Synod the matter is now offered in book form.


In order to better the book, the Author in these years, like the Frenchman, "took his own wherever he found it," but, unlike the old Roman, he "blesses those that said his own before him."

The book was not written for the gratification of the Writer, but for the edification of the Reader; still, if the Reader will be edified, the Writer will be gratified.

May God bless the Book, the Reader, and

THE AUTHOR.

Milwaukee, Lent, 1907.



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The Lord's Prayer

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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Our Father, Which art in Heaven,
Hallowed be Thy Name.

Thy Kingdom come.

Thy Will be done in earth as it is
in heaven.

Give us this day our Daily Bread,

And forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive
those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into Temptation;

But deliver us from Evil.

For Thine is the Kingdom and the Power
and the Glory forever and ever.

Amen.

Our Heavenly Father.

Our Father, Thou in heaven above,
Who biddest us to dwell in love
As brothers of one family,
And cry for all we need to Thee:
Teach us to mean the words we say
And from the inmost heart to pray.
Luther.

I.

God Is Our "Father."

A WORD OF FAITH.

"The best beginning and foreword is to know well how to call, honor, and treat him of whom we ask, and how to behave toward him, to make him favorable and willing to hear. Now, there is no name among all names that makes us more acceptable to God than 'Father.' That is a very friendly, sweet, deep, and heavenly speech," says Luther in his own hearty, winsome way. The great truth taught us by Christ is that God is our heavenly Father.

"Father" is the most precious name we have in this life, and fatherhood is the most exalted relation one can sustain to another. The noblest title we can give to our own George Washington is the "Father" of his country, and the noblest honor we can confer upon those mighty men of God who planted and defended the Gospel of Christ in the beginning is to call them the "Church Fathers."

"Father" was the word Christ used to denote His relation to God. When only twelve years old, He asked, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" Luke 2, 49. When He stood before the people as the Teacher sent from God, He said: "If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not." John 10, 37. In the Garden of Gethsemane, during the bitterest agonies of His soul, He cried out: "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Matt. 26, 39. The first of His seven words on the cross was: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," and the last: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." Luke 23, 34. 41. Now, as Christ made use of this precious name, so He bids us say "Father," and not God, or Lord, or Master. The reason for this is given in the beautiful words of Luther: —

"God would by these words tenderly invite us to believe that He is our true Father, and that we are His true children, so that we may with all boldness and confidence ask Him as dear children ask their dear father."

So it is. God is our true Father, and when we call Him "Father," we do not use a figure of speech or a formal title, but the right word in the right place. The heavenly fatherhood is not patterned after the earthly, but the earthly after the heavenly.

God is our Father by *creation*. God has

created us, and not we ourselves; His hand formed us out of the dust of the earth; He blew into our nostrils the breath of life, and so we became living souls. Therefore it is that Malachi 2, 10 asks: "Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?" Yes, "we are also His offspring." Acts 17, 28.

God is our Father by *redemption*. When we sinned and fell away from God, we cut the bond of relationship and disowned Him as our Father. Our heavenly Father did not rest satisfied with this; His heart yearned for us; He sent His Son to be our Savior. Christ bought us with a price, He redeemed us from slavery, "purchased and won us from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that we may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom." "God sent forth His Son to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal. 4, 4. 5. Looking at this truth, we must needs cry out in joyful wonder: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!" 1 John 3, 1.

God is our Father by *sanctification*. Having created and redeemed us, God also calls His children with a holy calling, enlightens them with His gifts, justifies them by faith, makes them holy by good works, keeps them in the narrow

path, and leads them into their heavenly rest. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father!" Gal. 4, 6.

We are God's children by birth and by the new birth; God is our Father by the triple tie of creation, redemption, and sanctification. Originally we are God's created children; by sin, God's lost children; through Christ, God's redeemed children; by the Holy Ghost, God's renewed children.

God is our Father: upon this truth we firmly plant our feet, on this foundation we place our trust, and howling storms, and lowering skies, and streaks of lightning, and rolls of thunder shall not be able to shake our trust.

II.

God Is "Our" Father.

A WORD OF CHARITY.

"Father" proves the fatherhood of God. "Our" proves the brotherhood of man. We cannot have God as our Father unless we will have man as our brother. We are not so many separate units, like beads on a string; we are members one of another and members of the body of Christ, brethren in Christ as well as children of God.

When Adam sinned, he lost his Father in Paradise and ran away from God as from an angry Judge. Through sin man also lost his

fellow-man as his brother, for Cain slew Abel. The fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man were lost in the dismal abyss of sin; Christ brought back these priceless jewels by His work and gave them to man in the words, "Our Father."

We are brethren by creation — "God giveth to all life and breath and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." Acts 17, 26. Because we are all of the same kind, we should always be kind. As William Tell pierced the apple without hurting a hair of his son's head, so should we cure our brother's faults without hurting his feelings. David Livingstone said it was dangerous to despise the manhood of the humblest savage. The Good Shepherd is painted as carrying a lamb in His arms; in the Roman catacombs He is painted as carrying a goat, an outcast of mankind!

We are brethren by redemption. As all nations have been made of one blood, so have all nations been bought by one blood. "As by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Rom. 5, 18. Being brethren all, "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks are to be made for all men." 1 Tim. 2, 1. More especially are Christians brethren one of another; for in addition to being created by the same Father and redeemed by the same Savior, they have been "begotten again" unto a lively hope by the resur-

rection of Jesus Christ from the dead, they have been "born again" by the Holy Ghost in the washing of regeneration and by the incorruptible seed of the Word of God, the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. The Christians are the living members of the spiritual body of the Church, of which Christ is the spiritual Head. As lively stones the Christians have been built into the Church in which Christ Himself is the great High Priest. The Christians are the soldiers of the Cross, who have enlisted under the Gospel-banner to storm the strongholds of Sin under the lead of the Captain of their salvation. The Christians throughout the world, from creation to Judgment, are the "communion of saints." Because we are brethren, we are to pray with others and to pray for others, not selfishly, "*My* Father," but charitably, "*Our* Father." "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are all called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in you all." Eph. 4, 4—6. As the Jewish high priest yearly went into the Temple to pray for his people; yea, as Christ, our High Priest at the right hand of God, pleads for His brethren, so are we to make use of our priestly privileges and appear before our Father's throne and plead for all mankind. Looked at from this angle, what an important, what a responsible, what a sublime thing it is for a Christian to pray, "Our Father"! Again, how comfort-

ing to think that every one of the whole vast army of saints throughout the world is pleading for me, for *me*, when he prays, "*Our Father*"! This cheers us on in our charity, knits us together in love, encourages us in our warfare, strengthens us in our pilgrimage, comforts us in our sorrows.

The very fact that God is the Father especially of the Christians, and the fact that not all men are enjoying the special privileges of the communion of saints, is for me a strong motive to work for the salvation of the unsaved that they may taste and see that the Lord is good. Christ gave Himself for us while we were yet sinners, His enemies; so must we, like Christ, give ourselves — not a few dollars merely, but ourselves — to the work of preaching the Gospel of the crucified and glorified Savior to the whole world that all may come into the family of our heavenly Father.

As Christ is not ashamed to call the most degraded sinners and His worst enemies His brethren, so ought we not to make any distinctions, but should call them all brethren and treat them as such. Think a moment what that means! Then think another moment and ask yourself whether you have ever really prayed the very first word of the Lord's Prayer! Montaigne wrote: "With reverence be it spoken, I love only myself." Many a man is a Montaigne —

He lives for himself, he thinks for himself —
For himself, and none beside;
Just as if Jesus had never lived,
As if He had never died.

Nor are you to pray only for your own family, as runs the famous prayer: "God bless me and my wife, our John and his wife; we four and no more. Amen." Nor are we to pray only for our own country, as the old Socinian hymnal: "Give rain and sunshine to Greiz, Schleiz, and Lobenstein; if others also wish them, let them pray themselves." "He that minds but himself in prayer," says an old writer, "doth not mind himself rightly. If thou prayest for thyself alone, thou alone prayest for thyself." The old Jewish proverb runs, "He that prays for another is heard for himself." "The Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends." Job 42, 10.

The air is laden with the voice of orators who discuss Political Economy; the pens of authors and editors drip with articles on Sociology; the printing-press teems with pamphlets and books treating on the Social Question; the legislatures throughout the land grapple with the problem of advancing the welfare of the poor: but to a great extent their labors are a waste of energy; for the most part they build on a shifting foundation; they largely attempt to hold people together with a rope of sand. "The supreme need of the hour is not elastic currency, or sounder banking, or better protection against panics, or bigger navies, or more equitable tariffs, but a revival of faith, a return to a morality which recognizes a basis in religion and the establishment of a workable and working theory of life that views man as some-

thing more than a mere lump of matter." And who, think you, is this preacher? Sereno Pratt, Editor of the *Wall Street Journal*!

Christ has given the panacea, the cure-all, of evil; He has given it in these two words — "Our Father." Men prate of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and that is the end of it all; for they have not found the bridge to span the gulf that separates these two truths. But Christ has thrown Himself across the chasm as the strong bridge on which God can come to man and man go to God, and having through Christ gone to God and found his Father, man goes back to man and finds his brother, and trusts the one and loves the other after the example set by Christ.

If we believe these words, "Our Father," we shall ask with Malachi, chap. 2, 10: "Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother?" If we pray right, we shall also live right; not as brothers often do, but as brothers ought to do.

The word "our" takes away pride from the rich, envy from the poor, and leads us to bear one another's burdens. The loftiest and the lowliest are on a level in the word "our," and therefore "let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted." As in the natural kingdom the richest blessings, such as air, sunshine, water, etc., are shared alike by prince and peasant, so in the

spiritual kingdom the alley and the avenue share alike in the sonship of God and brotherhood of Christ. With one radical sweep the word "our" does away with all caste, classes, and distinctions in the kingdom of God and makes us all kings and brothers. We are priests and princes of the blood royal, clothed in the garments of salvation and in the beauty of holiness.

What is true as to individuals holds good as to nations. The Jew despised everybody else as a Gentile, the Greek regarded every one else as a barbarian, and to every man a stranger was a wolf. The words "Our Father" do away with all this wherever people catch the spirit of the word. As the same sun in the heavens shines upon all nations alike, so the same Son of God makes all nations brethren when He teaches them to pray "*Our Father.*" The word "our" does away with color and culture, sex and section, distance and distinction. The words "Our Father" bridge oceans and connect continents, take in every latitude and all longitude, and of all the families of the earth they make one loving brotherhood in our Lord's fatherhood. "Our Father" makes of every true Christian a real cosmopolitan, who is thoroughly at home among all classes in all climes. "Our Father" raises the selfish local politician to the heights of a philosophic statesman of the broadest sweep, whose motto is: "Our country is the world; our countrymen are all mankind."

III.

God Is Our "Heavenly" Father.

A WORD OF HOPE.

1. An earthly father loves his children before they know him and can love him; the love of parents for their children is the most unselfish, the most beautiful affection upon earth, and a mother's love is the purest and tenderest theme of the poet's song. And yet, as high as the heavens are above the earth, so high is the love of our heavenly Father above the love of our earthly father. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Jer. 31, 3.

The ancient Greeks said with a sneer their gods were on Mount Olympus eating ambrosia and drinking nectar, altogether careless of the weal and woe of men below. Not so our heavenly Father; for "as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." The brilliant, but graceless poet Heine painfully dragged his half-paralyzed limbs to the Louvre to look for the last time upon the Venus of Milo, which was to him the type of all natural beauty, and he regretfully cried out, "But, ah! she has no arms!" So the idols of the heathen and the gods of the Oriental religions — they have no arms of love to draw their children to their bosom. Not so our heavenly Father: God was

in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself. Jesus Christ is the arm of our heavenly Father whereby He draws His fallen children to Himself and reveals to us that God is love.

Yes, one unquestioned text we read,
All doubt beyond, all fear above;
Nor crackling pile, nor cursing creed
Can burn or blot it — God is love.

God is love: His mercy brightens
All the path in which we rove;
Bliss He wakes and woe He lightens —
God is wisdom, God is love.

2. God is our "heavenly" Father. An earthly father often is too poor to help his children, but our heavenly Father has untold treasures to prove His love. "Our God is in the heavens, He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased." Ps. 115, 3. "With God nothing shall be impossible." Luke 1, 37. "The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of hosts." Hag. 2, 8. "The Lord is rich unto all that call upon Him." Rom. 10, 12. And He bids us call upon Him in the day of trouble, and He will deliver us, and all we are to do is to glorify Him. He that saved Noah from the Flood and the Israelites from Pharaoh; He that sent manna from heaven and water out of the rock; He that fed Elijah by the ravens and the five thousand people with a few loaves and fishes: He is still able to save to the uttermost those that call upon Him, for His arm is not waxed short.

And if we, being evil, will give good gifts to

our children, how much more will our heavenly Father give us all we need! Look at the lilies of the field, how they grow, and the birds of the air; our heavenly Father provides for them all, and are we not much more than they? "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Rom. 8, 32. Think you God is worse than an infidel? Then why doubt He will provide for His own? 1 Tim. 5, 8.

3. God is our "heavenly" Father. An earthly father will sometimes mistakenly give evil gifts to his children, but our Father has heavenly wisdom and will give none but good and perfect gifts to His children. He that has laid the foundations of the earth and thrown sun, moon, and stars into space and keeps them in their wonderful course these many ages, who planted mountain systems and counts the very hairs of our head — should He not know what works together for our good? So, then, if dark our way, if clouds lower, if no avenue of escape appear to our eyes, we can nevertheless trust Him. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord." Is. 55, 8. 9. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!" Rom. 11, 33.

Choose Thou for me my friends,
My sickness or my health;
Choose Thou my cares for me,
My poverty or wealth.

Not mine, not mine, the choice,
In things or great or small;
Be Thou my Guide, my Strength,
My Wisdom, and my All.

Earthly parents protect their children as best they can, and our heavenly Father surely will protect His children. Full of hope we look to Him for shelter in all storms that may threaten us. In six troubles He will deliver us, and in the seventh no evil shall come nigh us. The eternal God is our Refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. God is our Refuge and Strength; therefore will not we fear.

The worldly man begins with the world, and from the facts of sorrow and suffering, disgrace and death he mounts to heaven and with his inferences brands God as cruel, unjust, a tyrant. The godly man begins with God, and with the truth that God is his Father, he comes to earth with the cheerful conviction that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord. Not knowing God as his Father, the worldly man in trouble is a criminal in the dock, dreading his doom; knowing God as his Father, the Christian in affliction is in a training-school, fitting himself for a glorious future.

In the Scottish highlands some travelers saw beautiful flowers far down on a steep mountain-side and promised a reward to a shepherd boy for getting them, offering to let him down by a rope. The boy eyed the strangers with suspicion and refused, but was willing if his father held the rope.

The father was gotten, he held the rope, and the boy brought the flowers. If our God were a stranger, we might reasonably distrust Him in danger, but since He has shown us Himself as our loving Father in Christ Jesus, we can trust Him and cheerfully go down into poverty, sickness, death, and the grave, knowing our Father holds the rope and will draw us up again.

4. God is our "heavenly" Father. He is not an Eli, who is too utterly weak and shamelessly indulgent to check his sons in their riotous living.

The heathen nations dreaded their gods as quick to take offense and powerful to do harm; hence plentiful sacrifices were offered to appease their wrath, keep them in good humor, and turn away the harm they could do. Not thus is it with Christians and their heavenly Father. But neither will Christians have weakly, sickly, sentimental notions about God as if He cared not how we lived. "Be ye holy, for I am holy," says our Father. We must live up to our honors and opportunities; we must by our living give striking proof as to whose children we are. We must show our heavenly birth and breeding. It is "right" for children to obey their parents, because they are parents, and for this simple reason we ought to obey God in everything; obey God rather than men. Eph. 6, 1; 5, 1. God did not send a Savior that we might try His patience and tempt His wrath, but the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying un-

godliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Titus 2, 11. 12.

Being our Father, God chastens or corrects us to improve our character. Even as a tree, to bear more and better fruit, must at times be pruned; even as a diamond, to be more valuable, must be cut and ground; so must the Christian be subject to trials and tribulations. "My son, despise not thou the chastenings of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him. For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." Heb. 12, 5. 6; see also vv. 7—11.

5. God is our "heavenly" Father. Adam and Eve, the patriarchs and prophets, the judges and kings in the Old Testament, looked at the same heaven we look at to-day, and so heaven may stand as a faint type of the unchanging character of God. The glorious company of the apostles, the noble army of martyrs, the holy Church throughout all the world, prayed to our heavenly Father, and as He has helped in ages past, so will He help to-day and to-morrow. "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal. 3, 6. Our heavenly Father is the everlasting "I Am." He is not a man that He should change. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday and to-day and forever." Heb. 13, 8. "Which is, and which was, and which is to come." Rev. 1, 4. As the rock stands firm amid the surging and

foaming billows, or as the towering mountain peak stands in calm and solemn grandeur among the fleeting clouds and forked lightning, so our God is and remains our Father. Time may wing its flight into eternity, and the glory of the world may crumble in the dust, but our God is ever and ever the same loving Father.

When Alexander von Humboldt experienced his first earthquake in South America, the house he was in began to crack and fall about him. He rushed out, hoping to find shelter in the stronger ones, but they were lying in ruins. He lifted his eyes to the hills, but they were staggering as drunken men. He ran to the sea, but, lo! the sea had fled; he saw the bare keels of the ships in the mud. The ground under his feet was trembling. He felt he could never again trust anything on earth, seem it never so solid. In his despair he looked up and amid all the ruin saw that the sweet, silent blue heavens were unmoved.

Our God, our Help in ages past,
Our Hope for years to come,
Our Shelter from the stormy blast,
And our Eternal Home;
Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.

6. God is our "heavenly" Father. Does this mean that God dwells far away from us, up in heaven as in a palace? No; a local heaven is not meant. "Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee," says Solomon.

1 Kings 8, 27; cf. Ps. 139, 7—10. Wherever men may be — North, South, East, or West — and lift up their eyes, they see heaven, and so heaven is a good type of the nearness of God and a suggestion to pray wherever they may happen to be. Speaking at Jacob's Well, the Savior said: "Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain [Gerizim] nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." John 4, 21. God being everywhere, filling heaven and earth, Jer. 23, 24, everybody everywhere can call upon Him and make all his wants and wishes known. God is a God that is near, and not a God that is far off.

7. God is our "heavenly" Father. Though He is a God that is near, He is not of the earth, earthy. We call Him our "heavenly" Father because the spotless purity and unsullied beauty of the blue vault of heaven arching over us, untrod-den by the foot of man, unswept by aught but angels' wings, is a fine and fitting emblem of the purity of our heavenly Father. "He covereth Himself with light as with a garment." Ps. 104, 2. "He dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto." 1 Tim. 6, 16. "He is the Father of lights." Jas. 1, 17. "He is purer than the dross-consuming flame and charges even His angels with folly and putteth no trust even in His saints, and in His sight even the heavens are not clean and

the stars not pure." Job 4, 18; 15, 15; 25, 5. "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil and canst not look on iniquity." Hab. 1, 13. And when we spread forth our hands, He will hide His eyes from us; yea, when we make many prayers, He will not hear us, as long as our hands are full of blood. We must wash and make ourselves clean, put away the evil of our doings from before His eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, and then may we come before Him. Is. 1, 15. 16.

"Tell no lie," said King Darius to his son, "for you may one day be a king." We must do no wrong, for we are children of the King, ourselves kings and princes of the most high God. Therefore: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," but "come out from among them and be ye separate and touch not the unclean thing"; then He will receive us and be a Father unto us, and we shall be His sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. 2 Cor. 6, 14—18.

The Oriental splendors of the old princes of India and the imperial powers of the Roman Caesars who ruled the world are a hollow mockery compared with the glorious power and eternal dominion of Him who by the power of His voice called out of blackest nothing the earth and all it contains, the heavens and all the glories thereof, and who, by the same power of the voice when His Great Day is come, will wreck the universe and out of its chaos let a new earth and a new

heaven arise, splendidly glorious, as the holiness of our God. Before this glorious God, our heavenly Father, even the seraphim cover their feet with twain wings and their faces with twain wings, Is. 6; and before this majestic Lord Isaiah fell to the ground overwhelmed with a feeling of intense awe and the fearful cry: "Woe is me! for I am undone." Yes, this word "which art in heaven" is a rebuke to our overweening pride and exceeding vanity; this word "which art in heaven" teaches us, as no other word can, that we are to approach the Throne of Majesty with true devotion and deepest reverence; this word "which art in heaven" teaches us by contrast that we are dust and ashes before the Lord, our God.

And oh! how much we need to remember this solemn truth! How thoughtlessly and carelessly we say our prayers—say them, not pray them! Even on the Lord's day, in the Lord's house, when we come together expressly to worship our God, we often do not duly prepare ourselves for this great duty and privilege; sometimes we do not even take part in the service, we do not sing our glorious hymns, we do not pray the venerable collects of God's ancient Church, we are not attentive to the reading of the Scripture, we are not interested in the sermon. Whispering and giggling often goes on as if we were at an entertainment. When we visit our friends or go to the President's reception, we make better use of our good manners than we often do in the service of our heavenly

Father. Before church we divert our mind with the Sunday paper and small talk; we are not a bit careful to be punctual in our attendance, careless whether we disturb the congregation by our late coming; and the service over, we straightway plunge into gossip again. The Bible has the awful words: "The Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him"; but when do we feel the force of these majestic words?

When the Lord appeared to Moses in the burning bush, He said: "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Ex. 3, 5. The same thing God says to us every time we worship, and in that spirit we must appear before our heavenly Father. When God would give His holy Ten Commandments to the children of Israel on Mount Sinai, He said to Moses: "Go unto the people and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes." Ex. 19, 10. Likewise must we wash and sanctify ourselves when we appear before God to offer our prayers or hear His gracious Word.

Yes, our Father is exalted above the heavens. "For thus saith the High and Lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place." But that is not all. The same "High and Lofty One" adds the wonderful words: "With Him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Is. 57, 15.

Yea, our Father revives the spirit of the humble and intones to them: "*Sursum corda!*" i. e., "Lift up your hearts!" and gives them power to respond: "We lift them up unto the Lord!" The fact that our Father is our "heavenly" Father is now the strongest possible urging we can receive to approach Him with our prayer.

8. God is our "heavenly" Father. Think of the honor and dignity conferred upon us by this truth! If we have no train of servants obeying our every beck and call, armies of ministering angels have charge over us lest we dash our foot against a stone. If our names are not found in Burke's *Peerage* or the *Almanach de Gotha*, yet are they written in God's Book of Life. If we are not deeply versed in the works of philosophers, we may be wise in the wisdom of God. If we cannot be fashionably dressed, we are clothed in the garments of salvation and the righteousness of Christ. If we at present live in a hut, we shall live in the mansions of Jerusalem the Golden. Our beauty is the beauty of holiness, our jewels are the jewels of Christ's righteousness. We are nobles by an eternal decree, we are priests by the imposition of hands divine. We are ransomed by the agony and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and we are the children of the most high God.

Children naturally inherit their father's property and from their youth speak of "our house," "our garden," etc. The same holds good with our heavenly Father. We are His children; if chil-

dren, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. And our Savior expressly tells us: "In My Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you. Where I am, there ye shall be also." John 14, 1—3.

9. "In heaven" — ah, yes, in heaven! We are homesick exiles. We are yet in the valley of affliction, of darkness, and of weeping eyes; we are yet laboring in the sweat of our face, and our back is weary, and our hands are heavy; we are yet footsore and travel-stained in our pilgrim's progress; we are yet on the field of battle amidst the din and confusion of the fight, surrounded by the wounded and the slain. But our Father is in heaven, surrounded by His holy angels and by those that have overcome by the blood of the Lamb, where there is holiness, purity, and happiness without end, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. No wonder, then, that we say and sigh with David: "As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?" Ps. 42, 1. 2. Yes, we desire to depart and be forever with the Lord; we long to have finished the course, to have fought the fight, to have kept the faith, to be more than conquerors through Him that loved us, and we long to enter Jerusalem the Golden through the gates of pearl, arrayed in robes of white, crowned with palms, and tuneful harps in our hands, hearing the hal-

lelujah chorus by the happy voices of the redeemed, living in the mansions prepared for us, seeing the glory of our God and knowing Him even as we are known.

O Paradise! O Paradise!
I greatly long to see
The special place my dearest Lord
In love prepares for me.
Where loyal hearts and true
Stand ever in the light,
All rapture through and through,
In God's most holy sight.

Jesus, in mercy bring us
Soon to that land of rest;
Who art, with God the Father
And Spirit, ever blest.

The word "Father" teaches us to lean upon God with childlike trust — it is a word of faith; the word "our" teaches us to love our neighbor — it is a word of charity; the word "which art in heaven" teaches us to look up to God for help — it is a word of hope. So we have the whole compend of religion in the introduction to the Lord's Prayer. "Our Father which art in heaven," embraces the three heavenly graces of faith, hope, and charity. In the word "Father" we plant our feet firmly upon the everlasting Rock of Ages; in the word "our" we stretch out our hands right and left to every human being to help them to stand upon the same firm foundation of the saints of the Lord; in the word "which art in heaven" we

hopefully raise our eyes to heaven, to the hills from whence cometh our help, "from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." Phil. 3, 20. 21.

Our Father's Name.

Thy name be hallowed! Help us, Lord,
To keep in purity Thy Word,
And lead according to Thy name
A holy life, untouched by blame.
Let no false teachings do us hurt,
All poor deluded souls convert. — *Luther.*

“What’s in a name? That which we call a rose By any other name would smell as sweet.” Perhaps so; and yet there is something in a name even in our day, and in the beginning there was much in it. To “name” is to “know”; both came from the same root. “Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them; and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.” Gen. 2, 19. Created in the image of God, his faculties fresh and perfect before the Fall, Adam knew the nature of things and named them according to their nature; thus Adam called his wife’s name Eve because she was the “mother of all living.” Gen 3, 20. Thus did God change the name of Abram to Abraham, “a father of many nations,” and of Jacob to Israel, “for as a prince hast thou power with God,” Gen. 17, 5; 32, 28, and of Simon to Cephas or Peter, a rock, John 1, 42. And do we not call one Charles the Great, another Frederick the Wise, another William the Conqueror, another “Stonewall” Jackson,

another "Old Hickory"? Yes, we know a name ought not to be an empty sound, a mere label; it ought to be a short description, an epitome of qualities, an index to character.

I.

What Is God's Name?

God's name is that idea which He wants us to have of Himself. From the visible works of creation we know God is powerful, wise, good, and glorious; from the still, small voice of our conscience we know God is holy, just, everywhere, all-knowing; from the light-flashing and soul-comforting pages of the Bible we know God is "merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Ex. 34, 6. 7. All Scripture is a symphony in praise of God's name; yet in Jesus Christ we have the clearest revelation of God. The only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, "He hath declared Him," John 1, 18; 14, 9; for God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Cor. 4, 6. In Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Col. 2, 9. Christ is the brightness of God's glory, the express image of His person. Heb. 1, 3. Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us. Matt. 1, 23. Jesus and the Father are one. John 10, 30. 38. In

Christ we behold the divine features; "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." John 14, 9.

God *is* what His name implies. He is called Jesus because He is the Savior; He is called Christ because He is the Anointed. His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace, because He *is* all that. God's name squares with God's person, and so the psalmist also says: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name." Ps. 103, 1.

And now we ask:—

II.

What is Meant by Hallowing God's Name?

"God's name is indeed holy in itself," says Luther, and we can neither add to it nor take from it, much less than we can add to the sun by lighting a tallow dip or wipe out its existence by raising an umbrella. "But we pray in this petition that it may be holy among us," treated, kept, regarded as a holy thing, to be approached with awe and reverence, as we read: "Blessed be Thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise." Neh. 9, 5: "I will sing praise to Thy name, O Thou Most High." Ps. 9, 2. Hallowed is *holyed*.

We cannot make God's name holy; it should rather make us holy: open our eyes and understanding to its glorious beauty of holiness. What the tiny dewdrop is to the vast ocean, that is our

knowledge of God to the true and real essence of the Godhead. Hence we pray here for a better and greater knowledge of God, and larger and clearer and nobler ideas, notions, and thoughts of God and His qualities and attributes, so that we do not think of Him as small, stunted, weak, and narrow, but learn more and more of His love, and grace, and power, and glory, and wisdom, and holiness, and majesty, and excellence.

Not only are we small and have a small opinion of God, but we are also sinful and have sinful views of God. Ps. 50, 21. Though we were created in God's image, and God wanted to keep us drawn to Himself, after the Fall we want to draw God from heaven to earth and create Him in our image. As the heathen shape their gods according to their own character and notion, so we also are apt to think of God in accordance with our own character, wishes, and weakness; we look at God through our own sinful soul as through dirty spectacles and thus get Him all awry, deformed, and even wicked. For this reason our first petition must be, "Hallowed be Thy name," in order that all ignorance, doubts, and prejudices may be brushed aside and God be unveiled in His essence of absolute holiness. Unless I am first convinced that God is holy, I cannot pray the other petitions at all; unless God is holy, I do not want His kingdom to come and His will to be done.

Again, if I do not think even of my God as a strictly holy Being, I will easily and naturally

become very loose and lax in my morals, ravaging homes, pilfering money, destroying reputations, rebelling against authority in the home and in the state, and I cannot heartily ask Him to forgive my sins and keep me from temptation.

If I think of God as some heartless autocrat who rules the world by fate, I will naturally sink into fatalism and Oriental stupor and lethargy, impassively viewing all that happens and as in a stupor languidly murmuring, "It is fate." I may still be able mechanically to repeat certain formulas, but the wings of my prayers are clipped, they can never mount to heaven, but must fall to earth still-born. Therefore, as Jacob wrestled with God at Peniel and asked, "Tell me, I pray Thee, Thy name," and then said, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved," Gen. 32, 29, so must we in the first petition wrestle with God until He tells us His name and thereby reveals His nature.

Now that God has revealed Himself as my Father, He can naturally ask, "If I be a father, where is Mine honor?" and since I know God as my father, I can readily pray, first of all, that His name be hallowed. The greater the name of the father, the greater the glory in which the child can bask. The Father's glory and the child's good are so closely connected that the one cannot be increased without drawing showers of blessing on the other. So, then, when we pray, "Hallowed be Thy name," we pray that we may get large,

liberal views of God's power, pure and holy views of His character, high and noble purposes and aims in view of His majesty, a heavenly and saintlike character in view of His own spotless holiness. "Hallowed be Thy name," means that God may grant us according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith; that we, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we might be filled with all the fulness of God. Eph. 3, 16—19.

III.

How Do We Hallow God's Name?

The apt answer of Luther leaps to our lips:—

"When the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we as the children of God also lead a holy life according to it. This grant us, dear Father in heaven!"

So, then, two things are needed to hallow God's name, pure doctrine and holy life. It is the fashion in many quarters to speak slightly of correct doctrine and enthusiastically of correct living, as if right practise were not based on right principle, as if a good root were not needed for good fruit.

Why do so many people neglect the Bible? Because they do not believe the right doctrine,

to wit, that it is God's Word. Why do so many desecrate the Lord's day by despising the Gospel service? Because they have not the right doctrine, that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Why is marriage so lightly esteemed, and why are divorces multiplying with alarming swiftness? Because the people do not believe the right doctrine. Why do people live lives of luxurious self-indulgence? Because they do not believe the right doctrine, that they are stewards and must render an account to God. Principles produce practise. Creed creates conduct; the life of the soul shows itself in the life of the body; the hands are the servants of the spirit; mind molds matter; the spiritual governs the sensual; out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh; as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Prov. 23, 7. If the compass be at fault, the ship will founder on the rocks; if the guide be blind, will not the followers fall into the ditch? That shows us the importance of pure doctrine. For this reason "the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts." Mal. 2, 7. For this reason we are to hold fast the form of sound words in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus, 2 Tim. 1, 13. Again, "He that hath My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully." Jer. 23, 28. We must earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Jude 3. If pure doctrine were unimportant, why did God take pains to reveal

Himself at sundry times and in divers manners? Why did He command His name to be preached? Why did Christ say, "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me"? Away with such sinful silliness! Like Jeremiah, like John the Baptist, like Stephen, like Paul, like Luther, like many other saints of God, we must be jealous of God's holy name and let no shadow fall on His glory and His saving truth.

Having the correct knowledge of God, we must also properly acknowledge God. If our head understands Him, our heart must embrace Him; our knowledge must lead to intense love and loyalty. Knowledge puffeth up, charity buildeth up, 1 Cor. 8, 1; with knowledge alone we believe like the devils and tremble, Jas. 2, 19, but with a hearty acceptance we say, "Abba, Father." "Sanctify the Lord in your hearts." 1 Pet. 3, 15. "My son, give Me thine heart." Prov. 23, 26.

The believer being thus united to God, the confessing and professing of God's name before the people must needs follow. If head and heart are right with God, mouth and hands will soon fall into line, the whole life will be in complete harmony; "for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation," Rom. 10, 10, and our confession of God before men will be followed by Christ's confession of us before God. Matt. 10, 32. Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, Joshua, Elijah, Daniel, John the Baptist, Stephen, Peter, Paul, and others

confessed their God before His enemies, regardless of consequences; so must we hallow God's name and bear courageous testimony.

Jealous of pure doctrine and zealous of good works is the Christian. "Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit," says Christ, John 15, 8. "As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." 1 Pet. 1, 15. By our good works we glorify our Father in heaven and teach others to hallow His name. Matt. 5, 16.

A Christlike Christian is the best credential of Christianity; a holy life is the most eloquent plea for its reception and the most withering rebuke of its mockers. As the Father sent Jesus to show to the world the Father, so the Savior sends us Christians to show to the world the Savior. Through Christ we know God; through us others are to know Christ. "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." John 20, 21. A Christlike Christian is the chief ornament of Christ's Gospel. Such was Enoch, who walked with God; such was Hannah, the mother of Samuel, 1 Sam. 1, and Anna, the wife of Phanuel, Luke 2, 36; such was Dorcas, Acts 9, 36; such are many saintlike men and women in our day, whose life is hid with Christ, of whom the world is not worthy, but who are the few righteous Lots for whose sake this worldly Sodom is not yet ruined by fire and brimstone from heaven.

Yes, by pure preaching and holy living God's

name is hallowed; by false preaching and wicked living God's name is profaned. For this reason the Scriptures earnestly caution us against all false doctrine. Even if an angel from heaven bring other doctrine, Paul would have him accursed. Gal. 1, 6—12. Only by taking heed unto the doctrine shall we be saved. 1 Tim. 4, 16. "False prophets" and "deceitful workers" are the names Paul applies to those who preach false doctrine, 2 Cor. 11, 13, and Christ calls them "ravening wolves," Matt. 7, 15, to show their dangerous character. No wonder Zephaniah, 3, 4, calls such prophets "light and treacherous persons" and says such "priests have polluted the Sanctuary, they have done violence to the Law." Hear God's complaint against these false teachers: "Her priests have violated My Law and have profaned Mine holy things; they have put no difference between the holy and profane." Ezek. 22, 26. Hear God's words of indignation: "Will ye pollute Me among My people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, to slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not live, by your lying to My people that hear your lies?" Ezek. 13, 19.

False doctrine is dangerous; by it souls are slain. But how many "priests" to-day do the same! They cry, Peace, peace! when there is no peace, that they might be at ease in Zion. They do not uphold the right and denounce the wrong in their own congregations, all for "handfuls of

barley and pieces of bread," for popularity, a fashionable church, a large salary.

The natural consequence of false doctrine is an unholy life, whereby God's name is also disgraced, as the Lord says Rom. 2, 23. 24: "Thou that makest thy boast of the Law, through breaking the Law dishonorest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written" (Ezek. 36, 22. 23.: "Thus saith the Lord God: I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for Mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. And I will sanctify My great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them." Again hear the complaint of the Lord, Mal. 2, 11: "Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the Lord which He loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god." God says, 2 Tim. 2, 19: "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ," *i. e.*, who professes to be a Christian, "depart from iniquity" and live a godly, a holy, a Christ-like life, and obey God when He says: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt. 5, 16. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. 10, 31. "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord

Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him." Col. 3, 17. "As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation: because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy." 1 Pet. 1, 15. 16.

If we do not lead a holy life, we prove by our works that we do not hallow God's name, and our example will hinder others from doing it, and our words will be a hollow mockery and lead others to think that Christianity is a sham, as we ourselves are a sham. Where God's name is used to curse by, or where it is used in frequent and unnecessary oaths, or where it is used in singing and praying to open up the performances of fortune-tellers, spiritualists, etc., there His name is not hallowed, but profaned and brought into contempt. The same holds good of people fond of quoting the Bible to create a laugh, — and how many foolish Christians are guilty of thus profaning God's name and setting at naught this First Petition!

The American Indians had a wonderful respect for their Great Spirit, and their native tongue has not one single curse-word; now that we have civilized them, they can curse; but they have to do it in English. In many countries the English are nicknamed *Goddams*, from their favorite curse-word. Cowper says that a Chinaman, hearing an Englishman using the name of God so often, took him for an eminent saint and begged an interest in his frequent prayers. Kinglake tells

us during the awful days of the Crimean War an officer asked, "Are things better?" The sergeant replied, "They are, sir; the men are beginning to swear again."

We profane God's name on the one hand by a too frequent use and on the other by a too infrequent use. How often do we by cowardly silence deny Christ, when we ought boldly to confess Him before men! Were any one to asperse the character of one of our relatives or friends, would we not indignantly repel the charge and champion his cause? And yet we often are as silent and as dull as a clod when our own dear Savior is slandered by vile lips. More than that. Is not God's name profaned by those who go to church in a formal manner as a mere pharisaic rite and ceremony and sing in a listless manner and listen in an absent way to the prayers, readings, and sermons? by those near to the Lord with their lips, but absent with their hearts?

Rather than throw a pinch of incense on the altar to worship Caesar, the martyrs of old went to their death at the stake or to the lions in the arena; but we, alas! often compromise our Christianity and disgrace God by engaging in certain fashionable follies because we are afraid of being laughed at if we hold aloof!

For fear of the Jews, Nicodemus went to the Savior at night-time, and likewise do many desire to be disciples secretly. But it cannot be; if we will not confess Christ before men, neither will

Christ confess us before His heavenly Father. Going to church is such an act of confessing, and the "dull service," the "bad singing," yea, and even the "poor preaching" do not at all stand in the way of such an act of confession. Even if we ourselves could not at all receive any personal benefit from a service, our staying away would profane God's name, and our going would be an act of confessing Christ, it would glorify God, it would hallow God's name.

When we let our light shine, and unbelievers see our good works, they will be led to glorify our Father in heaven and also hallow His name. When the unbelievers see that Christians are pure amid impure surroundings and honest among cheats and truthful among liars, sober amid drunkards, patient under provocation, resigned in sorrow, kind to enemies, comforted in death, they will know that the tree bearing such fruits has its roots in no earthly soil, that a heavenly power is at work in the souls of such people. The Jewish rulers, "beholding the man which was healed standing with them, could say nothing against it"; likewise can unbelievers say nothing against the name of Christ, which effects moral cures and turns the chief of sinners into the chief of saints. "Many believed on Him when they saw the miracles which He did." The most cogent and eloquent writings in praise of God's name are devoted Christians, "living epistles of Christ, known and read of all men."

But we have not the power of ourselves to hallow God's name; that is the reason Luther says, "This grant us, dear Father in heaven!" We cannot of ourselves hinder profaning the name of God, and hence Luther says, "From this preserve us, heavenly Father!" Nevertheless, we must not on that account be careless of ourselves and sleepily fall into sins. No; Christ says, "Watch and pray!" Christ says, "Be sober, be vigilant!" Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, making your calling and election sure! "Fight the good fight of faith!" Christ says: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

And, finally, we pray, "Hallowed be Thy name." *God's* name is to be hallowed; we are not to seek our own glory. God's glory is the chief end and aim of the Christian. As the sun is light and gives light to the world, but receives none, so is God all glorious within Himself, and this glory cannot be lessened nor heightened; but as the moon receives light from the sun and reflects it upon earth and lights up its darkness at night, so the glory of God shines upon His Christians, and it is reflected upon others in good and holy works to the praise and glory of God, and this reflected or declarative glory is heightened by our efforts. This being our chief Christian aim, let us strenuously bend every effort and strain every nerve to effect our purpose, hallow God's name.

"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory," was the prayer of David; and this same prayer is to be the guide of our actions. In the service of God, in hallowing His name, we are to forget self, deny self, sacrifice self. God's name is to be hallowed, no matter at what cost; we are the means to promote the end. If the object is attained, no matter what becomes of the instrument; if the battle is won and the victory sounded, we do not regret the broken sword and are proud of our tattered colors. When the glorious victory of Marathon was won, the swift runner Pheidippides brought the good news to anxious Athens: "Rejoice ye! we, too, rejoice!" and sank down dead. In his patriotism he forgot his own self. The French boy dashed up to Napoleon and announced the victory of Ratisbon. The chief's eye brightened. "But you are wounded, my boy," he said. "Killed, Sire!" said the youth and dropped down dead. In the glorious event he forgot his own self. In New York City is the statue of the noted American spy Nathan Hale, who was put to death by the British. Just before his death he regretted that he had only one life, and not a thousand, to lay down for his country. On Decoration Day we wreath with garlands the graves of our braves who freely shed their life's blood for their country's cause, who held their own life cheap in comparison with the life of their country. Now, this same spirit, only in a higher degree and on a nobler plane, should animate the

soldiers of the Cross that they hold in contempt everything dear to them when it comes to hallow God's name. "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren." This spirit was the mainspring and the secret of the glorious work of noble-minded Paul. This spirit should animate and dominate us also in our Christian work. "Father, glorify Thy name," was the prayer of our Savior. "If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not My will, but Thine, be done." Even if it takes me to the cross, Father, glorify Thy name.

My brother, my sister, if you are Christ's, this spirit of Christ will be in you also. You pray, "Hallowed be Thy name." Have you ever seriously counted the cost of that prayer? Have you ever considered what that demands of you? A prayer is a very costly thing. It is a dangerous thing to toy with; it is grasping greed, hungry as the grave: if a genuine prayer seizes you, it will take captive your soul and chain it to the throne of the Crucified. Now do you mean what you say when you pray, "Hallowed be Thy name"? If not, do not mock God any more. If you do, surrender yourself to the service of the Savior and do His bidding. If God will cut and polish the diamond of your soul with tribulation that it sparkle with heavenly fire in the light of His countenance, do not draw back. If God bids you champion a lost cause or lead a forlorn hope, do not let your cheek blanch, your lips quiver, your eye flinch. God's

name is greater than your life, and you must not hesitate in your choice. In life and in death your motto is, "Hallowed be Thy name."

"Hallowed be Thy name!" — Thereby we oppose all unbelief which does not accept God; thereby we oppose all false belief, which would mingle light and darkness, truth and error, concerning God; thereby we oppose all forgetting of God, which cares nothing at all about God, one way or another; thereby we oppose all enmity of God, which will not bow under His authority, will not serve Him, but rebels against Him; thereby we oppose all nominal Christianity, which does not really and heartily serve God with might and main; thereby we oppose all man-fear, which will observe a cowardly silence when God's honor is at stake; thereby we oppose all carelessness and indifferentism in regard to the souls' salvation of our neighbor.

"Hallowed be Thy name!" — This is a confession that we have not hallowed it as was our duty, but that we have profaned it in heart, in word, and in deed, and thereby have given offense to God's weak children, and have given occasion to His enemies to mock it and scoff at it.

"Hallowed be Thy name!" — This is a promise that we will diligently search the Scripture, gladly hear the sermon, earnestly pray for light, and, following that, know more and more of God's name and will and character.

"Hallowed be Thy name!" — This is a solemn

vow that we will henceforth consecrate ourselves, body and soul, to the service of hallowing God's name, to labor with might and main to spread His name among the nations of the earth, that they also may bless it and be blessed by it, in order that we may, in a measure, say with Christ: "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee; but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. And I have declared unto them Thy name and will declare it, that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them." John 17, 25. 26.

"Hallowed be Thy name!" — So Thy Son has taught us to pray, and therefore: "We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty."

"Hallowed be Thy name!" — Therefore we sing the song of Moses and the Lamb: "Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints; who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name?"

"Hallowed be Thy name!" — Therefore we take part in the liturgy of the celestial temple and join in the heavenly Hallelujah Chorus and "with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Thy glorious name, evermore praising Thee and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory."

"Hallowed be Thy name!"

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!

All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and
sky and sea:

Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty;

God in Three Persons, Blessed Trinity!

"Hallowed be Thy name!"

Thy name be hallowed! Help us, Lord,
To keep in purity Thy Word,
And lead, according to Thy name,
A holy life, untouched by blame;
Let no false teachings do us hurt,
All poor deluded souls convert.

"Hallowed be Thy name!"

Lord, I believe Thou hast prepared,
Unworthy though I be,
For me a blood-bought, free reward,
A golden harp for me.
'Tis strung and tuned for endless years
And formed by power divine
To sound in God the Father's ears
No other name than Thine.

Our Father's Kingdom.

Thy kingdom come! Thine let it be
In time and through eternity!
O let Thy Holy Spirit dwell
With us, to rule and guide us well;
From Satan's mighty power and rage
Preserve Thy Church from age to age.

Luther.

I.

1. The Kingdom of Power.

A kingdom is a king's dominion, every person and thing over which a king is ruler. Our Father's kingdom extends over all: heaven and all its glories, earth and all it contains, hell and all its infernal spirits. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein." Ps. 24, 1; 47, 2. "The heavens are Thine, the earth also is Thine; as for the world and the fulness thereof, Thou hast founded them." Ps. 89, 11. "The Lord is a great God and a great King above all gods. In His hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is His also. The sea is His, and He made it; and His hands formed the dry land." Ps. 95, 3—5. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created." Rev. 4, 11. "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven

and in the earth is Thine. Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as Head above all." 1 Chron. 29, 11.

When God sent the Flood and destroyed all flesh and saved faithful Noah in the ark; when God confused the language of the people at the building of Babel's tower; when God led Israel dry-shod through the Red Sea and drowned Pharaoh and all his warlike host; when God gave manna from heaven and water out of the rock and turned Balaam's curses into blessings; when Christ gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, motion to the paralyzed, health to the lepers, relief to the possessed, life to the dead; when God sent His snow and defeated the vaulting ambition of Napoleon in Russia; when God sent His rain and hurled the mighty Corsican from his power at Waterloo; when God sent His wind and dashed the proud Spanish Armada against the rocks and shattered the power of the Papist Philip II: God proved Himself the Lord in His Kingdom of Power.

2. The Kingdom of Grace.

There is not only the Kingdom of Power, but also the Kingdom of Grace; not only a natural kingdom, but also a supernatural kingdom; not only a physical kingdom, but also a spiritual kingdom.

The Kingdom of Grace is called the "kingdom of heaven," Matt. 3, 2; and justly so, for it comes

from heaven, Luke 2, 8—11; it reaches as far as the heavens, 1 Tim. 2, 4; 2 Pet. 3, 9; Matt. 28, 19; it makes us heavenly, Phil. 3, 20; and it leads to heaven, John 14, 2, 3; 17, 24.

Another name the Bible has for this Kingdom of Grace is the "Church," *ecclesia*, called out, separated, from the world; not of the world, worldly, but of God, godly; consecrated to His service, devoted to the glory of His name, under the headship and leadership of Christ, Col. 1, 18; united by the one Lord, one faith, one baptism into the one body of Christ, for the communion of faith, hope, and charity. The Kingdom of Grace we speak of in the Third Article when we say: "I believe in the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins." In this kingdom we sing:—

Blest be the Lord, who comes to men
With messages of grace;
Who comes in God His Father's name
To save our sinful race.

The Kingdom of Grace is God's Church on earth, in which He by the preaching of the pure Gospel and the Sacraments reveals Himself as our gracious Father and loving Savior, "forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin," calling His sheep out of the wilderness of sin to Himself, leading them upon green pastures, and gently carrying the lambs in His bosom. This is the kingdom of the redeemed, and they adore and worship Christ as their God; this is the kingdom of the

children of God, and they obey God as their Father; this is the kingdom of the royal priesthood, and they own allegiance to no man, be he prince or priest; they acknowledge no authority, be it imperial or pontifical; Christ, and Christ alone, is their Head, and Him they worship willingly, Him they adore ardently, Him they homage heartily.

Of this kingdom it is that God says: "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion." Ps. 2, 6; Ps. 72. Of this kingdom it is that Christ says: "My kingdom is not of this world." John 18, 36. Of this kingdom it is that Christ speaks: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye and believe the Gospel." Mark 1, 15.

This Kingdom of Grace is not only the Gospel-preaching Church in general, but also each and every Christian heart in particular. There Christ dwells by faith, Eph. 3, 17; there Christ is enthroned in grace and rules supreme; the kingdom of God is within you. Luke 17, 21. "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Rom. 14, 17. And where Christ is thus enshrined in the heart, He will make felt His presence and power. By the work of the Holy Spirit He will lead that man to live a holy life, to be a salt in the earth, a light of the world, a guide unto heaven.

It was the purpose of God at creation that the soul of man should be especially the kingdom of

God; but His gracious purpose was ruthlessly thwarted. Man raised the standard of revolt, treason perched upon his banner, he rebelled against his liege Lord, and went over to the enemy, waging war against the Lord of lords; his soul became a hostile province, the enemy's base of operation. Man became sinful and was lost; Paradise was lost, and the earth became an Acedama. Sin with its countless hosts of evils, death and damnation, entered the world and fastened their fangs upon our first parents, poisoning the foundation of life and the stream of humanity.

But it was not to remain so forever. As soon as sin entered the world, the Savior from sin was promised: the Woman's Seed who was to crush the Serpent's head when the time would be fulfilled. From the Fall the fathers of the infant world preached the name of the Lord; the patriarchs taught it their households, the prophets pointed to the coming Messiah, and many were faithful and hoped in Him.

Yes, even in the Old Testament times there was a kingdom of God: Israel was God's people and realm; God was Israel's king; Jerusalem was His residence; the Temple, His palace; the Ark of the Covenant, His throne. Glorious as this was, it was only the shadow of the reality, the promise of the good things to come. The budding promise blossomed forth in glorious beauty when the Lion of Judah leaped upon the scene and said: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at

hand; repent ye and believe the Gospel." Mark 1, 15.

Since then apostles and evangelists, martyrs and missionaries, preachers and teachers, have been holding aloft the Gospel-banner for the healing of a dying world. They have been recruiting officers to swell the ranks of the soldiers of the Cross, and these have been waging a ceaseless warfare against the kingdom of Satan, the lord and god of this world. With the Gospel, the power of God, they have been storming the strongholds of sin, throwing open the prison-cells, shattering the chains of the captives, and bidding them be free men and women in the glorious liberty of the children of God. They have been the workmen getting the souls from the quarries of sin, smoothing them with the Law and Gospel, and building them as lively stones into the spiritual temple, the habitation of God. They have been sowing the good seed of the Gospel on the field of this world and reaping the sheaves of good works to the glory of God.

Satan is the lord of this world, but only by usurpation; Satan disturbed the kingdom, but he did not supplant it. This mysterious and exalted kingdom is called in general the "kingdom of God," but it is more particularly the kingdom of Christ. He is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and since then is He by God's eternal decree the Foundation and Corner-stone of His kingdom, His Church, and by faith all the be-

lievers of the Old Testament times have been built upon this foundation.

But as a matter of fact accomplished in time, heaven and earth, violently torn asunder by Adam's sin in Paradise, have been knit together by the coming of Christ into the flesh. By His birth in Bethlehem, by His circumcision in the Temple, by His blameless life in Israel, by His agony in Gethsemane, by His sufferings under Caiaphas, by His scourging under Pilate, by His shameful death on Calvary, and by His burial, He has conquered heaven's foes and out of the spoils has carved a kingdom for Himself, and so it is called the kingdom of the Son, the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. By His descent into hell He has heralded His conquest to the spirits in prison; by His glorious resurrection He has proclaimed His victory to all the sons of men; by His triumphant ascension He has made known to heaven's angelic hosts that His great mission is fulfilled; by His sitting at the right hand of God He defends and extends His reign.

This He does through the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, whom He sends through the Gospel from the Father into the hearts of His people to fill them with zeal and strength and wisdom to follow up the victory and be His fellow-laborers in gathering up into this kingdom all such as shall be saved, and every soul converted is a new addition to the kingdom of our Savior, wrested

from our vanquished enemy. This kingdom has been built upon a rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; it shall stand firm and secure against all attacks and assaults of open enemies without, against all plotting and conspiracies of false friends within.

This glorious Kingdom of Grace, the Church of God, was given to Christ for His own as a reward for the work of redemption successfully accomplished by Him. Christ was God, but He emptied Himself and took upon Himself the form of a servant. He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; "wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2, 6—11. "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor," Heb. 2, 9; "for the suffering of death," *i. e.*, on account of the suffering and death. Yes, for the sake of this Kingdom of Grace, His Church, "for the joy that was set before Him," He "endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Heb. 12, 2.

The Savior's kingdom is not of this world; it is altogether unlike the kingdoms of the world.

The Ruler rules wholly for the good of His people and not at all for selfish interests. He controls not only the body, but also reigns supreme in the heart. The obedience He receives is the obedience of the will; the loyalty He enjoys is the loyalty of the heart. Not lip service, but heart service is brought to His altars, in spirit and in truth, not that "thrift may follow fawning." His conquests are conquests of love, and His warriors salute Him as they go forth to die in His service. The more His kingdom prospers, the more do the kingdoms of the world prosper; in fact, the object of His kingdom is to be a blessing to other kingdoms. In the Savior's kingdom the tax-bill is not presented at the point of the bayonet, but the offerings are brought freely, cheerfully, as God hath prospered. Soldiers are mustered in, they are not drafted, they are cheerful volunteers; they are armed, a warfare is waged, but the weapons are not carnal, and the fight is against all manner of evil. Other kingdoms may rise, flourish, and decay, but this kingdom shall endure unto the end of the world.

O where are kings and empires now
Of old that went and came?
But, Lord, Thy Church is praying yet,
A thousand years the same.

3. The Kingdom of Glory.

Yet even this blessed Kingdom of Grace, bought with the unspeakable riches of Christ's precious blood, is not a finality; it, too, shall pass.

away; it is the bud unfolding into the blossom; it is but the means to an end; it is the state of transition from the Kingdom of Power to the Kingdom of Glory, the Father's kingdom proper. It shall last to the Judgment Day. "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivereth up the kingdom to God, even the Father, . . . that God may be all in all." 1 Cor. 15, 24—28. As the river is at an end when it is embraced by the sea, whence it came, so the Kingdom of Grace is no more when it has become the Kingdom of Glory in heaven with God.

This kingdom will fully begin when Christ comes to judge the quick and the dead. Of this kingdom we speak in the Third Article when we say: "I believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting." To this kingdom Paul wistfully looked when in his old age he wrote to Timothy: "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom." 2 Tim. 4, 18. This kingdom Paul so beautifully describes as "being with Christ." This is the kingdom to which Christ will invite His own on that joyful day with the tender words: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. 25, 34.

Into this Kingdom of Glory we shall indeed be brought, but it will be through much tribulation. With the inner eye of faith we see through our prison-cell the place prepared for us by Christ,

and the Spirit of God bears witness with our spirit that now we are the children of God, and helps us say, "Abba, Father." But we are still in this world; we are standing in the shadow of the cross of Christ; we, too, are men of sorrows and acquainted with grief, deemed stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted; we are yet surrounded by the ceaseless temptations of our wily, sleepless Adversary and the fascinating allurements of his trusty ally, the artful world; and the Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition, is in the world; sin and woe, want and misery, stare us in the face with a hideous grin; worst of all, we ourselves have sinful flesh and blood, which so often, despite ourselves, coquets with the world, so that we, too, in the agony of our soul must cry out as did Paul: "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7, 25. But when our earthly journey is ended and our spiritual warfare accomplished, our souls shall "be with Christ," and on Judgment Day our bodies, too, shall be changed and made like to His own glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself. Then shall we servants be where our Master is; then shall we have the place prepared for us by our Savior; then shall God wipe away all tears from our eyes; then shall we enjoy the pleasures at God's right hand forevermore; then shall we throw our crowns at the feet of our Redeemer and worship God in the beauty of holiness.

II.

Having seen that God has three kingdoms, we now naturally ask for which kingdom we pray in this petition. We do not, of course, pray for the Kingdom of Power, — for we are already in that, — but we do pray for the coming of the Kingdom of Grace and, as a natural consequence, for the Kingdom of Glory. When we pray this petition, we pray that the heralds of the Cross may be multiplied, so that the ends of the earth may hear of the salvation of our God; so that men everywhere may be called out of darkness to His wonderful light; so that all nations may come to the saving knowledge of God, in accordance with the Scripture, which says: "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth." Ps. 72, 8. "Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth." Ps. 96, 10. And if they will not believe in this Savior, He shall be proclaimed nevertheless, whether they hear or whether they forbear, as a witness, that they may be without excuse: "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24, 14.

So, then, this kingdom will come, whether men pray for it or not. What, then, does this petition mean? Luther answers:—

"The kingdom of God comes indeed without our prayer, of itself; but we pray in this petition that it may come unto us also."

Aye, "come unto us also," that is the point for us in this prayer:—

Savior! Savior! hear my humble cry:
Whilst on others Thou art smiling,
Do not pass me by!

And how does the kingdom of God come unto us? Luther answers:—

"When our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead a godly life, here in time and hereafter in eternity."

This kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom, and it comes in a spiritual way from the Spirit of God to the spirit of man. The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; that is, you are not a Christian because you eat or do not eat pork; because you eat or do not eat meat on Friday or during Lent; because you wear or do not wear a gold button or a broad-brimmed hat. The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; that is, Christianity does not consist in big stone buildings with towering spires, and sounding chimes, and stained-glass windows, and carpeted floors, and cushioned pews, and paid choirs, and grand organs, and ornamental pulpits, and carved altars, and marble fonts, and bronze lecterns, and elaborate liturgy, and imposing rites, and magnificent ceremonies, and feast-days, and fast-days, and fairs, and bazaars, and theatricals, and concerts, and kitchens, and committees, and societies, and guilds, and bands, and Sons of this and Daughters of that.

To look at the doings of many modern churches the conviction is pressed upon us that the foregoing is their conception of the kingdom of God, and when that is accomplished, they complacently fold their hands in their lap and go to sleep. That is an entirely erroneous conception. The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, "for he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God." Rom. 14, 17. 18. The soul of man is to be a province of which Christ is the Governor. Christianity is not a set of forms and formulas, but it is righteousness with God; peace of conscience, peace with our fellow-man; joy in the Holy Ghost, rejoicing in the spiritual things the Holy Ghost dispenses. Therefore —

Fling wide the portals of your heart,
Make it a temple set apart
From earthly use for heaven's supply,
Adorned with prayer and love and joy;
So shall your Sovereign enter in,
And new and nobler life begin:
To Thee, O God, be praise
For word, and deed, and grace!

"The kingdom is myself," said Louis XIV of France. His courtiers called Louis XV "France," as if the king were the whole kingdom. "All the Roman Empire centered in Rome, all Rome in the palace, all about the palace in Caesar," says Gibbon. These words are literally true of Christ, for whose Kingdom of Grace we pray. When the English nobles at last saw it was useless any longer to fight against William the Conqueror, they came

one after another, bowed low, laid down sword and shield, kissed the king's hand, and said, "*Devenio vester homo*, I become your man," and this is what it means to do homage. In order to come into the Kingdom of Grace, we must do homage to Christ, lay down the weapons of rebellion, kiss the Son, and become His man. In the beautiful words of David Livingstone's diary we say, "My Jesus, my King, my Life, my All, I again dedicate my whole life to Thee."

For know, nor of the terms complain,
Where Jesus comes, He comes to reign,
To reign with universal sway;
E'en thoughts must die that disobey.

"Thy kingdom come" is a humble confession "that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him." "Except a man be *born again*, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Of course, we cannot give birth to ourselves; we are begotten, not of the will of man, but of the will of God and by the "seed of God." And so we sing with Dante:—

Come unto us the peace of Thy dominion,
For unto it we cannot of ourselves,
If it come not, with all our intellect.

"Thy kingdom come" is a hymn of thanksgiving and praise. The very fact that I can pray this petition is prime evidence that I have already been translated from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of Jesus Christ, that I hate sin and love holiness and, as a natural consequence, fight against all wrong and pray for all that is righteous.

"Thy kingdom come" is also a very humbling confession, namely, that God, who is Lord over all, has been deprived of His kingdom in us, that owing to our fault He has been a King without a kingdom and kept from His own. This shameful condition humbles and hurts us even now, when we think what rebels and robbers and ravagers we have been. It is a confession, even now that we are God's children, a confession that God has not yet been able to conquer and pacify us thoroughly, but that in the swamps and mountain wilds of our hearts the outlaws, outcasts, brigands of evil thoughts, lusts, and passion still break out and destroy God's peaceful reign of blessed law.

"Thy kingdom come" is a prayer for improvement. While we proclaim with thankful hearts that the kingdom of God has come to us, we must also confess with mournful hearts that it has not yet come altogether, and, therefore, with longing hearts we ask for more and more. We pray in this petition that God would grant us according to the riches of His glory to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, that we might grow up into Him in all things, Eph. 3, 16; 4, 15; that we might abound more and more, 1 Thess. 4, 1; that we might forget those things which are behind and reach forth unto those things which are before, press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, Phil. 3, 13, 14; that we might add to faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowl-

edge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity, 2 Pet. 1, 5—7; that we might be made perfect, established, strengthened, settled, 1 Pet. 5, 10. Verily, this is a Pentecostal petition, a missionary effort, urging the work of home missions in the own heart to bring the rebellious lusts and passions under the obedience of Christ.

“Thy kingdom come” is a Pentecostal petition; “beginning at Jerusalem,” we are to carry the Gospel to others also and thus do foreign mission work. The light being lighted in the inner man, it must shine through the deeds of the outer man. We cannot hide the light under the bushel, we must set it on a candlestick. “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren,” said Christ to Peter. Luke 22, 32.

“Thy kingdom come” is also a promise. After the flower the fruit; after the prayer the practise. Prayer, like faith, without works is dead. If not followed by action, prayer will never reach heaven, but as a brilliant sky-rocket will burn out and fall back into the night. God has prepared the Gospel of His goodness for the poor. The Lord gave the Word; great must be the company of those that publish it. Ps. 68, 11. The Word of the Lord must have free course and be glorified among others as well as among us. 2 Thess. 3, 1. The Word must be glorified, — every other effort is beside the mark, every other exertion is folly,

and folly in this momentous work is a stupendous crime.

"Thy kingdom come" is a trumpet-call to action. It arouses us from the stupor of indifference and urges us to defend and extend the limits of God's kingdom of grace.

"Thy kingdom come" is a sacred pledge we give to do everything in our power to help fulfil that petition and not to relax our effort. And Jesus said unto him, "No man, having put his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Luke 9, 62. "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently!" Jer. 48, 10 — marginal reading. "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion!" Amos 6, 1. "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." Judg. 5, 23. The kingdom of God can come without you, but woe unto you if it must come without you! Christ prepared the supper, but He sent out His servants to bid the people come and eat. Christ fed the five thousand, but He made use of the lad with the five loaves and two fishes. If you have not ten talents, you must not bury your one in a napkin. Wonders are not expected of you; all that is required is that you be found faithful. Sin and all its consequences have been in the world since the days of Adam; sin and all its consequences will be in the world till the Day of the Lord: will you,

then, throw down your arms and spend your time in vain regrets and pious wishes? Fight the good fight of faith! Take arms against a sea of troubles! Quit you like men!

O watch, and fight, and pray,
The battle ne'er give o'er;
Renew it boldly every day
And help divine implore.

The times are out of joint; God has made you a Christian for the purpose of doing your share to set them aright. The world is in darkness; God has made you a light to lighten the world. The world is full of corruption; God has made you a salt in the earth; do not lose your savor!

Of an ancient tribe it is written that while others went to *battle*, these went to *war*: fighting was the one employ of their lives. So with the Christian: "This one thing I do." "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." The old Roman army was called an *Exercitus*, because, veterans though they were, they had to exercise every day to remain hardy and supple to be ready at a moment's notice to go out to fight and conquer. The soldiers of Christ must be an *Exercitus*.

"Thy kingdom come" urges you to give yourself to Christ, yourself with all you are and all you have to the service of the Master. You are to have your heart right with God and give your help to the congregation to which you belong, to build it up and widen the sphere of its usefulness. Every service is to see you in your accustomed place; the school is to know you as its helping

friend; the congregational meeting is to have your presence, your advice, and your help; the neighborhood is to feel the influence of a godly character and a stainless life.

"Thy kingdom come" asks you to send your gifted son to college to prepare him for the kingdom's work as a godly preacher or a faithful teacher, or to send your neighbor's poor, but bright boy.

"Thy kingdom come," young man, demands of you, if you are able to do so, to bid farewell to the prospects of professional or commercial triumphs and bring them as a sacrifice to the service of Christ and to enlist in the band of His heralds proclaiming the Gospel-tidings to a ruined world. If you cannot do that, it bids you work faithfully and live economically and give liberally, so that you can send, or at least help send, other young men to prepare for the ministry, and otherwise in your young people's meetings to show your faith working by love.

"Thy kingdom come" bids you, young woman, forego the sinful follies of a fleeting world and adorn yourself with shamefacedness and sobriety and be a handmaiden of the Lord, first a Mary to sit at Christ's feet to learn and then also a Martha to go out to serve. That sick woman in the alley back of your house, — can't you do anything for her? Those ragamuffins in the lane, — can't you dress and wash them and take them to Sunday-school?

"Thy kingdom come" urges one and all to pray, work, and give money for churches and colleges, students and missionaries, for English missions and German missions, Colored missions and Indian missions, Jewish missions and heathen missions.

Hamilcar of Carthage took his little eight-year-old Hannibal to the temple, laid his hand on the altar, and had him swear to the gods to fight Rome all his life with all his might. And Hannibal kept his boyhood vow through all his manhood years. "A. L. O. E." (A Lady Of England), Miss Tucker, "when a girl, examined her features in a mirror and resolved that, since she never could be pretty, she would try to be good and prove a blessing to the world." She became a great missionary and a famous author of books, and her influence became as the attar of roses. Such boys and girls, men and women, of zeal for Christ we promise to be when we pray, "Thy kingdom come."

Do you treat missions with sympathy, apathy, or antipathy — are you a friend, an idler, or an enemy? "We never talk about missions. We are trained for them and live for them," said a Moravian. So must it be with every Christian. When Caesar made war on the Germans, even the women helped the men to battle against the enemy. When Napoleon made war on Germany, the women cut their golden tresses and sold them to get money to help the war-chest. Canon Tristram saw a temple building in Japan, the large stones being raised by fifty-three strong ropes of fifty feet each,

made of hair. Some 250,000 Japanese women cut their hair and sent it to help build the temple. "Oh, for a pagan zeal in Christian hearts!"

"Thy kingdom come" urges you to stem the tide of ever-increasing lawlessness. The bribing and corrupting capitalist is an anarchist of deeper dye than those of Chicago's Haymarket, and both are to be resisted.

"Thy kingdom come" calls you to fight the rum-holes, where greedy men cruelly debauch their fellow-man, and the dens of death, where brazen women lure their victims to shameless deeds.

"Thy kingdom come" bids you oppose the grasping greed of soulless corporations and the cruel tyrannies of the bosses of labor organizations.

"Thy kingdom come" demands of you to resist all lies, frauds, and corruptions in trade and traffic wherever found in the dealing of man with man.

"Thy kingdom come" rouses you to bend every effort to prevent injustice in the courts of justice and the halls of the legislature; to stop the slanderous tongue and punish the perjuring lip and reveal the glittering gold in the smooth hand of the corrupting lobbyist and the hungry hand of the betraying legislator or venal judge.

"Thy kingdom come" looks to the better feeding of the hungry and the better clothing of the naked and the better treatment of the sick, the afflicted, the aged, the better education of all.

"Thy kingdom come" pleads for truth in

science, for purity in painting, for nobility in music, for peace in politics, for charity in church. Milton's Moloch had his eyes so glued on the golden pavement that he could never look up; some Christians have their eyes so fixed on Jerusalem the Golden that they cannot look down. But that is wrong. The kingdom of God is within us, and it must work out, as a leaven leavening the whole lump. The kingdom of God within must needs improve the kingdom without.

If you thus fight against your own Old Adam and pommel your body, as St. Paul says, and keep it in subjection; if you thus at home, and in church, and in business, and in society, and in politics manfully stand up for what is right and strike home and strike hard, you will stir up much enmity, and you may sometimes be appalled by threatening dangers; but the question is, Do you fear God or do you fear man? If you fear man, well and good, swim with the stream and keep silence, but then also do not dare pray, "Thy kingdom come." If you do not want it to come, if you are not willing to work for its coming, then do not take this prayer into your mouth. But if you fear God, then fear not the face of man; with singleness of heart hew to the line and care not where the chips may fall; obey God's orders and care not who may be arrayed in opposition.

"Thy kingdom come" is a test of character; it is a plummet sounding your deepest thoughts; it is an X-ray piercing your heart to show whether

you are sound to the core; it is a sensitized plate, telling whether you are double-faced; it is a balance weighing you and telling whether you are found wanting. Protesting against many evils he saw around him, a young officer awakened the hornet swarms of hatred and slander. In distress he asked the gallant Outram, the Bayard of India, "What am I to do amid this storm of calumny?" Outram replied, "Do you fear God or man? If you fear God, do as you are doing and bear the insults that are heaped upon you. If you fear man and the mess, let everything go on as it is and make no protest." No matter what others may do, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord," said Joshua. In one of the battles of our Civil War a young officer stood at a battery which had dwindled down to a single gun; that single gun he loaded and fired again and again. At last the bugles rang out the victory of his army, and, said he, "then I knew that whatever others did, for me a victory meant keeping my own gun loaded and fired."

If you pray this prayer and practise it, you will be doing the Lord's will, and blessed will you be at the Lord's coming. In doing God's will, God is with you.

Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed;
For I am thy God and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee
to stand,
Upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand.

"Thy kingdom come" is a prayer of comfort and trust and hope. While our heads are bowed and hearts drooping and hands feeble, we lean upon the arm of the Almighty. "The Lord reigneth." He will deliver Israel from Egypt and lead them through the Red Sea and the wilderness into Canaan. He will free us from the captivity of Babylon, and we shall dry our tears and take our harps from the willows. He will fill our mouths with laughter and our hearts with melody. When He will come in glory, as He will come in due time, we shall arise to meet Him and shout:—

"Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

Our Father's Will.

Thy will be done on earth, O Lord,
As where in heaven Thou art adored!
Patience in time of grief bestow,
Obedience in weal and woe;
Our sinful flesh and blood control
That thwart Thy will within the soul.

Luther.

I.

What Is It?

"Thy will be done!" — God's will be done. In nature God's will is done so regularly and forcibly that purblind philosophers call it the "reign of law" and cannot see in it the reign of the Giver of the law. With infinite regularity and precision the mighty sun has been rising and setting since first the world began, and the same law that guides with firm grasp the millions of stupendous stars holds in control the tiny speck of dust airily dancing in the sunbeam. The tides go and come and are serenely unmindful of the authority of even King Kanute. Time comes, and as he goes, he strews frost on the locks of the giants of intellect and plows furrows on the face of the witching queen of beauty. God sends His gentle zephyrs, and they dally with flowers of summer; He sends His destructive tornadoes, howling in hunger for prey; and who can stay their course? "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer

and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." Gen. 8, 22.

(Yes, even when the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing, when the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us, even then He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision; He will break them with a rod of iron, He will dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel, — even then they do His will. Man proposes, but God disposes. The brethren of Joseph meant evil, but God meant well, to save many people. Even Homer, the blind grand singer of ancient Greece, while describing the bloody feud of ten long years between Greeks and Trojans, says: "The purpose of Zeus was all along being accomplished." And thus the Bible speaks. In his Pentecostal sermon Peter charges the Jews with the death of Christ: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Acts 2, 23. And yet, a few days after the disciples rapturously exclaim: "Of a truth against Thy holy Child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done." Acts 4, 27. 28. Without dis-

cussing at this point God's rule and man's free will, it is true: "Man proposes, but God disposes." "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand." Prov. 19, 21. Pharaoh thought he opposed God, but God said: "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee My power, and that My name may be declared throughout all the earth." Ex. 9, 16. Even Satan does the will of God, as we may see from the history of Job. Had there been no Satan, there had been no Savior. Our humiliation in the Fall was as deep as hell, but our exaltation in the salvation of Christ is as high as heaven.

And what is more, even in the domain of grace God's will is done without our prayer. Christ founded His Church on His death and resurrection, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. But the very life-breath in the nostrils of the Church is its missionary activity; when that fails, the heart-beat stops. The last will and testament of our Lord in the Communion before His death is to show His death till He come, and the final reminder before His ascension from Mount Olivet is: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." So whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear, the Gospel of grace will be preached, and the sons of God shall be born as the dew of the morning till the day of the Lord come as a thief in the night.

"Thy will be done!" If God's will is done,

what, then, does this prayer mean? Luther in his precious Small Catechism answers:—

“The good and gracious will of God is done indeed without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also.”

Aye, that's it! “That it may be done among us also!” And what is this good and gracious will? “This is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the Last Day.” John 6, 40. “It is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.” Matt. 18, 14. After we have received Christ as a sacrifice for our sins, we also receive Him as an example for our life; justification by faith brings forth sanctification by works. And this is His commandment, “That we shall believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.” 1 John 3, 23. “So is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.” 1 Pet. 2, 15. “This is the will of God, even your sanctification.” 1 Thess. 4, 3. The sum and substance of God's holy will as given in the Ten Commandments is: “Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind,” and, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Matt. 22, 37. 39.

“Thy will be done” — why?

Because it is the will of God, our chief Good.

Because it is "that good, acceptable, and perfect will of God." Because "in keeping of them there is great reward." What God's will forbids is an ill; what it commands is a benefit. His precepts and His promises alike express His love. The thunders of the Law call out, "Do thyself no harm!" The lightnings of Mount Sinai ask, "Why will ye die?" When God forbids me to harm my neighbor in any way, He forbids my neighbor to harm me in any way. When God asks me to receive Him as my God, He asks to be received as my Good.

II.

How Is It Done?

"When God breaks and hinders every evil counsel and will which would not let us hallow God's name nor let His kingdom come, such as the will of the devil, the world, and our flesh, but strengthens and preserves us steadfast in His word and faith unto our end: this is His gracious and good will."

According to this there is a Triple Alliance opposing God's will, a confederacy of evil which God must rout and crush if His good will is to be done. The three conspirators are the devil, the world, and our own flesh.

The Old Evil Foe
Now means deadly woe:
Deep guile and great might
Are his dread arms in fight;
On earth is not his equal.

With might of ours can naught be done,
Soon were our loss effected;
But for us fights the Valiant One,
Whom God Himself elected.
Ask ye, Who is this?
Jesus Christ it is,
Of Sabaoth Lord,
And there's none other God;
He holds the field forever.

The devil is the sworn enemy of God and man; he sinneth from the beginning; he is a murderer from the beginning; he is a liar and the father of it. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil, 1 John 3, 8; and through death Christ destroyed the devil, Heb. 2, 14. When we pray "Thy will be done!" we pray for strength and courage that we, too, might fight the devil, to be sober, to be vigilant, to resist the devil that he may flee from us. Eve in all her holiness fell a victim to Satan; we in all our sinfulness may be victors over Satan. In that mysterious duel Christ fought with Satan in the wilderness we learn the secret of success. "It is written!" was the keen blade wielded by Christ; let us also draw the gleaming sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, and the victory shall be ours.

Though devils all the world should fill,
All eager to devour us,
We tremble not, we fear no ill,
They shall not overpower us.
This world's prince may still
Scowl fierce as he will,
He can harm us none,
He's judged, the deed is done;
One little word can fell him.

Satan's trusty ally is the deceitful world with her alluring pleasures and dazzling vanities. As the fair, but false Delilah ensnared and ruined the strong Samson, so the world with her artful wiles tries to ensnare us in her seductive meshes and to shear us of our strength and to betray us; it is only the grace of God that can enable us to withstand her fascinating advances. The earnest warning of John falls lovingly on our ears: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." 1 John 2, 15—17. The world's fascinating words drop as honeycomb, but the poison of asps is under her tongue, and only God can break her evil counsel and help us to withstand her and to quit ourselves like men.

I have no skill the snare to shun,
But Thou, O Christ, my Wisdom art!
I ever into ruin run —
But Thou art greater than my heart.

Now, whenever we pray, "Thy will be done," we pray for help from God to resist the world, as Joseph resisted the charms of Potiphar's wife; that we might spurn the world, as Abraham spurned the gold of the king of Sodom, Gen. 14, 23; that we might forsake the world and turn to God's people, as Moses forsook the glories of

Egypt's splendid court and threw in his lot with the despised children of Israel; that we, like Daniel, might defy the frowning force of the world, though it take us into the lions' den; that we, like John the Baptist, may denounce wickedness in high places, though we pay the penalty with our head; that we, like Paul, may count everything as a loss, if only we gain Christ.

The third enemy leagued against God's will is our own flesh. Our corrupt heart is a powder magazine, and the least spark will touch it off and cause an explosion and spread havoc and disaster. Our heart is a hotbed of all noxious weeds, and the least opportunity will cause it to burst forth in opulent growth and quickly ripen its deadly fruit. "I am carnal, sold under sin. For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. The evil which I would not, that I do. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7. "Now, the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like. And the flesh lusteth against the Spirit." Gal. 5. Man, sinful clay, has the sad and stupendous liberty of opposing and thwarting the gracious will of God. The Savior sadly says: "Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life." "How often would I have gath-

ered thy children, and ye would not!" "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." Even the Christians must be admonished again and again, "Quench not the Spirit"; "grieve not the Holy Spirit of God."

"Thy will be done," that is to say, Teach me to do Thy will. Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies. When our will would cross God's will, God is asked to swing our will around so that it may run parallel with His will.

Renew my will from day to day,
Blend it with Thine, and take away
All that now makes it hard to say,
"Thy will be done!"

"Thy will be done," is a perfectly safe prayer for us to offer. God's will is a loving will, for He is our Father; His will is a holy will, for He is heavenly. His fatherhood to us is the source of His will to us. His will is not opposed to the mission of Christ as our Savior. He has no secret will in conflict with His revealed will. God's will and God's actions must be viewed from the love of God in sending Christ to be our Savior. God's will is always good, and when we pray, "Thy will be done," we pray not in order that God may do His own will, but that we may be willing and enabled to do what He wills to be done by us, as St. Cyprian says.

Whate'er my Father wills is best,
Delight or suffering, toil or rest.
Thine eye, and Thine alone, can see
What I should have and do and be.

I only ask that I may know
The way which Thou wouldst have me go;
That I my will in Thine may lose,
That what Thou, Lord, for me shalt choose,
I, too, may choose.

God's will must become our will, so that our will may be God's will. "What wilt Thou have me to do?" was Paul's first question after Christ had met him on the way to Damascus; and that must be our first question after the Savior has come to us. "If my God does not will as I do, I will as He does, and so we always remain good friends."

"Thy will be done," — thereby we pledge ourselves to learn the will of God and not to mistake our own whims and notions for the same. As the apostle says: "Be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is," Eph. 5, 17; and "prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God," Rom. 12, 2. "Show me Thy ways, O Lord; teach me Thy paths." Ps. 25, 4.

"Thy will be done," — thereby we pledge ourselves to do the will of God, as David prays: "Teach me to do Thy will; for Thou art my God," Ps. 143, 10; and as the apostle prays: "The God of peace make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight," Heb. 13, 20, 21. "After ye have done the will of God, ye shall receive the promise." Heb. 10, 36. "Well, God mend all!" said Lord Rea in 1630. "Nay," impatiently exclaimed Sir David Ramsey, "nay, Donald, we must

help Him to mend it." Daniel Webster was once asked at a dinner party, "What is the greatest idea that ever entered your mind?" After a pause he answered, "The greatest idea that ever entered my mind is the idea of personal responsibility to a personal God." With great feeling and eloquence he explained how this idea was fitted to touch and ennoble every part of a man's life. One who was present says all the guests forgot to eat, so charmed were they with Mr. Webster's eloquence. Let us be filled with this idea, and then we shall do God's will.

"Thy will be done," — thereby we pledge ourselves to suffer the will of God whatever it may be, pleasant or unpleasant. "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf." 1 Pet. 4, 16. "Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator." 1 Pet. 4, 19. "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." 1 Pet. 4, 14. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." 1 Pet. 4, 12, 13. "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, yet I will rejoice in the Lord."

Hab. 3, 17. 18. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." 2 Cor. 4, 17. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." Rom. 8, 28. "Our trials often act as a prickly hedge, which wounds, but guards us from the steep precipice or deep river." A soaking rain shows damaged places in the roof which need mending; trials reveal to us the weak spots in our character which need strengthening. "As the destruction of Aquileia and other towns on the Italian coast caused their inhabitants to flee to the islets of the lagoon, from which there afterwards arose the temples and palaces of the queenly city of the Adriatic, so the most threatening perils and darkest trials of the believer have often been the means of erecting temples of spiritual beauty far surpassing that palatial city of the sea." Trials are not meant to be stumbling-blocks, but stepping-stones in climbing the mount of holiness.

Siding with God; I always win;
No chance to me is lost:
His will is sweet to me, e'en when
It triumphs at my cost.

Ills that God blesses are my good —
All unblest good is ill;
And all is right that seems most wrong
If it be His dear will.

"Thy will be done!" — "It is God's way, not ours," were the last words of President McKinley. "I mourn, but I try not to murmur," said a

poor widow who had just buried her only child. "I must bear this affliction inevitably, and by God's grace I shall try to bear it nobly," said Jeremy Taylor, "the Shakespeare among preachers."

III.

Examples of Doing It.

"Thy will be done." — Now, the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father's house unto a land that I will show thee." No doubt it was very hard, but Abram departed as the Lord had spoken unto him.

"Thy will be done." — Abraham was old, and his wife Sarah was old, and yet he believed God would keep His word and make him the father of many nations. When Isaac, the son of promise, was born, and God put Abraham's faith on trial by calling for the sacrifice of Isaac, Abraham's faith staggered not. So must we be willing to lay our nearest and dearest on the altar as a sacrifice to God when His glory is at stake, though our heart be wrung with anguish.

"Thy will be done." — When Job was suddenly bereft of all his sons and daughters and possessions, he yet exclaimed with resignation: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." Job 1, 21; 13, 15.

"Thy will be done." — King David in exile,

fleeing from the wrath of his own rebellious son Absalom, said to God, "Behold, here am I; let Him do to me as seemeth good unto Him." 2 Sam. 15, 26.

"Thy will be done." — When the friends of Paul wept because he was to be delivered to the Gentiles, he answered: "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." Acts 21, 13.

O Lord, my God, do Thou Thy holy will,
I will be still;
I will not stir, lest I forsake Thine arm
And break the charm
Which lulls me, clinging to my Father's breast
In perfect rest.

"Thy will be done." — Christ's whole life is the fulfilment of this petition. "I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." When He taught, He testified: "My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me." When He hungered, He said: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me and to finish His work." When He performed miracles, He said: "The works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me." In His priestly prayer He said to His Father: "I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." John 6, 38; 7, 16; 4, 34; 5, 36; 17, 4. On Mount Olivet, in His fearful agony, the words were

pressed from His lips: "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Matt. 26, 39. From the beginning through to the end, Christ's life is an illustration of what man's life is when ordered according to the petition, "Thy will be done."

Looking at the life Christ led, looking at the prayer He taught us, it surely takes courage to say, "Thy will be done!" and of a truth, it is the hardest petition, and in order to pray it aright, we have need first to pray:—

My God, my Father, while I stray
Far from my home on life's rough way,
O teach me from my heart to say,
"Thy will be done!"

However, having counted the cost and having cast in our fortune with our Savior, let us not like Lot's wife look back upon Sodom, but let us resolutely set our foot towards Zoar on the hills whence cometh our help; let us unflinchingly look forward; beyond the dark breaks the dawn; beyond the sword waves the palm; beyond the cross shines the crown. Having our heart resting firmly on this faith, we can say with all our heart,

Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow Thee;
Destitute, despised, forsaken,
Thou from hence my All shalt be.
Perish every fond ambition,
All I've sought, or hoped, or known;
Yet how rich is my condition!
God and heaven are still my own.

Go, then, earthly fame and treasure!
Come, disaster, scorn, and pain!
In Thy service, pain is pleasure,
With Thy favor, loss is gain.
I have called Thee Abba, Father!
I have stayed my heart on Thee;
Storms may howl, and clouds may gather,
All must work for good to me.

"Thy will be done" — or the devil's. This is a terrible choice, but the only one. God's will crucifies us, but it supports us under the cross and finally crowns us with glory. If we refuse to do God's will in view of the sacrifice it demands, we will do our own will — and that is the devil's. "My people would not hearken to My voice, and Israel would none of Me; so I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust, and they walked in their own counsels." Ps. 81, 11. 12. Refusing to be God's servants, we dream of becoming our own masters; but when we awake from the dream, we find ourselves in the chains of Satan. When Adam and Eve no longer did God's will, but their own, they did the devil's will and not their own. Their liberty led them into Satan's slavery. When they walked without God, they walked out of Paradise; ever since their children do the same.

"Thy will be done" condemns the deceitful man, rebukes the self-willed man, strengthens the weak man, quickens the lazy man, cheers the despondent man, comforts the suffering man, upholds the dying man.

"Thy will be done" is the torch lighting the path of knowledge, the key unlocking the richest

treasures of wisdom, the hall of experimental philosophy, truly so called; for "if any man shall do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." John 7, 17.

"Thy will be done" is the Open Sesame and passport to the very *élite* of select society. Persons who have an acquaintance with all the best and famous people usually belong to that class themselves. "Not to know me argues yourself unknown." Now, "Thy will be done" assures us of our acquaintance with Christ: "Hereby do we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments." He that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. Matt. 7, 21.

"Thy will be done" is the letter-patent of nobility. By a stroke of the sword a king can make of a commoner a Sir Knight. Such favors of royalty can raise a man in the social scale, but cannot improve his character. "Thy will be done" not only makes us peers of the realm, but companions of the King, knights of the Round Table, yea, verily, it makes us princes of the blood royal, born in the purple; for, says Christ, "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is My brother and sister and mother."

"Thy will be done" is the Elixir of Life, the fountain of youth and immortality. In 1512, twenty years after Columbus's first and great discovery, Ponce de Leon, an aged Spaniard, sailed from Porto Rico in search of a wonderful fountain

in one of the Bahama Islands said to impart immortal youth to all who might drink of its waters; he found Florida, he did not find the fountain. "Thy will be done" is this famed fountain, for "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

IV.

The Manner of Doing It.

If we now ask as to the manner in which God's will is to be done, our petition answers, "As it is in heaven."

Here is not meant the sun, bounding through the skies in the splendor of his dazzling glory, neither the moon, walking in brightness, shepherding her starry fold, though the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork, but here is meant the hosts of angels, the ministering spirits hearkening unto the voice of His word, they who sang creation's story and proclaimed Messiah's birth.

"As it is in heaven" — all.

In heaven they all do God's will: "Are they not *all* ministering spirits?" In heaven every knee bows to Christ, and every tongue confesses that Jesus is the Lord. Angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, powers and dominions, thrones and principalities — all the angelic hosts sing, Holy, holy, holy, is God, the Lord of Sabaoth. On earth it is not so. The people doing God's will are to be found only here and there, they are few and far between, as a few oases in the wild

waste of the Sahara of this sinful world, as a few Lots in the Sodoms and Gomorrahs. Now, in this petition we pray that everywhere all the children of men may be turned from their waywardness, rebellion, and self-will to do the will of God,

May we Thy precepts, Lord, fulfil
And do on earth our Father's will
As angels do above;
Still walk in Christ, the living Way,
With all Thy children and obey
The law of Christian love.

“As it is in heaven” — all together.

The earth is full of rivalry and jealousy; we belittle and slander each other and intrigue against each other; we are narrow, bigoted, selfish, and clannish. Even the Church of God is “by schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed,” and creeds and rites and liturgies and ceremonies build up walls of partition. Even in church-work we look with jealous eye on the success of our brethren, as Cain did on Abel's sacrifice. Even in church-work we wish to sit, like the sons of Zebedee, one on the right, the other on the left hand of Christ. Even in church-work our eye is evil if the Lord of the vineyard in the goodness of His heart gives to another a penny as well as to us. This petition is to do away with all jealousy and create good will and harmony. The great Richard Hooker on his death-bed said he was thinking of the quarrels on earth and the obedience of the angels, without which peace could not be in heaven. “Oh, that it might be so on earth!”

“As it is in heaven” — always.

The angels serve Him day and night in His temple. In heaven God's will is done as ceaselessly as the waters gush out of the living spring and flow through valleys to the ocean. There no serpent enters to disturb the steady service; there no breath of murmur interrupts the incense of obedient praise rising to our God. We pray that our service may be of the same kind. We usually do God's will by fits and starts; sometimes our spiritual pulse is at fever height, most times it is below zero. On New Year's Eve we form good resolutions, and most likely we have forgotten all about them by New Year's night. We keep on forgetting for a long time, till we wake up with a start and think it is high time to go to Holy Communion. In the preparatory service we in our hearts promise the Lord to do better in the future, and possibly we think we really mean all we say; soon we are back in our old ways. Sometimes we are like the soaring eagle; again, like the moping owl. Sometimes we feed on manna; again, on husks. Our obedience is like the flower of the field: “in the morning it flourisheth and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth.” We pray God to grant us grace to have done with such fitful service and to enable us to serve Him steadily and ceaselessly. Napoleon's “Old Guard” would die, but it would not surrender; let us die in doing God's will, but never surrender.

“As it is in heaven” — with all our might.

Even in the best of us the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; the evil which we would not we do; and the good which we would we do not; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. Now, this petition asks for the observance of the command: “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.” We should renew and redouble our efforts that the Lord may praise us as He praised the woman: “She hath done what she could.” We pray in this petition what Paul prays for 1 Thess. 5, 23: “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” When a heathen sculptor took great pains with even the hidden parts of his statue, friends told him it was a waste of work, for no one would ever look there. “The gods see it,” was the reverent reply. “Thou, Lord, seest me,” should ever be in our minds, and we should always do our work as “in our great Taskmaster’s eye.” Said the old rabbis, “The day is short, the work abundant, the laborers remiss, the reward great, the Master presses; therefore be bold as a leopard, swift as an eagle, bounding as a stag, brave as a lion, to do the will of thy Father which is in heaven.”

“As it is in heaven” — intelligently.

When Joseph’s brothers sold him into slavery, they did not know that God intended it for good,

that Joseph "might preserve much people alive." When Augustus taxed all the world, he did not know he was doing God's will, that Christ might be born in Bethlehem, according to the prophecy of Micah. In a like blind manner many people do God's will. But we pray in this petition that we may do it not mechanically, but intelligently, that we may present our bodies a living sacrifice to God, which is our reasonable service. "Give me understanding, and I shall keep Thy Law." "Make me to understand the way of Thy precepts." Jesus said to His disciples: "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify Him; and the third day He shall rise again." Matt. 20, 18. Though Jesus knew what was before Him, He did not flinch, but set His face like flint and resolutely went to Jerusalem to do God's will. Though Agabus foretold the fate of Paul, and though friends tried to keep him from going to Jerusalem, Paul replied: "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." Acts 21, 13.

"As it is in heaven" — loyally.

Angels obey the will of God loyally, "hearken-
ing to the voice of His command." They do not
make themselves a Supreme Court to try whether

God's laws are constitutional. They carry out God's laws — whether to destroy Sodom or rescue Lot; to destroy the hosts of Sennacherib or to feed Elijah and carry him to heaven; to open the mouth of Balaam's beast or to shut the mouths of the lions in the den with Daniel. The angels obey God loyally, be the work a menial service or a glorious enterprise. And so we pray God in this petition to grant us grace to do His will loyally, not to sample His laws and pick out what pleases us, but to do them loyally, whether they be popular or not, whether they cost us money or bring us money, whether they wreath our brow with laurels or crown it with thorns. Our greatest work is, in itself, of no value; our smallest work, done in Christ's name, will be remembered and rewarded by Him, though it be but the giving of a crust of bread or a cup of cold water. And so we pray with holy George Herbert:

Teach me, my God and King,
In all things Thee to see,
And what I do in anything
To do it as for Thee.

A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine;
Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws,
Makes that and th' action fine.

This is the famous stone
That turneth all to gold;
For that which God doth touch and own
Cannot for less be told.

"As it is in heaven" — joyously.

God wanted Moses to free the Israelites from the slavery of Pharaoh, but Moses was very unwilling and offered excuses and gave God much trouble before He got Moses to obey. Only after bitter experience was Jonah ready to obey God and preach to Nineveh. Jeremiah disputed God's orders before he obeyed them. In like manner are we ready to agree with Christ that His will is a yoke and a burden, but not so ready to assent that His yoke is easy and His burden light. Matt. 11, 29. Not so in heaven. God's angels have no drooping wing, no loitering step, no drowsy eye, no sluggish arm. And so we pray in this petition that we may be enabled to say: "*I delight to do Thy will, O Lord,*" that our feet may not be shod with lead, but fitted with wings, that we may fly to do God's will promptly and not put it off until to-morrow or the next day. In heaven "He maketh His angels winds, His ministers a flaming fire," — so may it be with us on earth. "I made *haste* and *delayed not* to keep Thy commandments," says the psalmist; so may it be with us. Mackay, the famous missionary in Uganda, said one day, "With me it is duty before pleasure." At once he corrected himself, "No, that is not it; with me duty is pleasure." "Let us greet the unseen with a cheer," wrote Robert Browning in the presence of death. When the gladiators entered the arena to fight to the death, they cheered the watching emperor, "Hail, Caesar, those about to die salute

thee!" Let us do God's will joyously, and if we must needs die, let us die with a shout, cheering our Savior.

"As it is in heaven" — unselfishly.

"Behold, we have forsaken all and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?" was the rather sordid question of Peter, Matt. 19, 27. This spirit is wrong. The Lord will reward us, beyond the shadow of a doubt; but we are not to serve the Lord for a future reward, but for His past grace. We are to serve the Lord as the angels do, of whom Edmund Spenser sings:—

How oft do they their silver bowers leave
To come to succor us that succor want!
How oft do they with golden pinions cleave
The flitting skies like flying pursuivant
Against foul fiends to aid us militant!
They for us fight, they watch and duly ward
And their bright squadrons round about us plant;
And *all for love* and *nothing for reward*,—
O why should heavenly God to men have such
regard?

"As it is in heaven" — willingly.

In spite of himself, Pharaoh had to let the Israelites go, and in spite of himself Balaam could not curse the Israelites, but had to bless them, and in like manner to-day many people do God's will because circumstances lead them or stress of conscience drives them. Many go to church and to Communion, give work and money, not out of love to the work, but for fear of hell. Their service is a sort of spiritual blackmail which their

fear levies. Not so in heaven. The angels kept their first estate and are confirmed in blessedness. Free to fall, as the devils that fell, they chose to stand and so to render to God a loyal and willing obedience. And we pray God in this petition to grant us grace to be His willing people, not the slaves of a master, but the children of a father, not the hireling *Landsknechte* of a feudal lord, but the patriotic volunteer citizen-soldiers loyally following the banner of the chief of their choice. When Abraham Lincoln needed more soldiers, the people responded with an exulting cheer, "We are coming, Father Abraham, five hundred thousand strong!" When a Scottish regiment at Windsor was appealed to for volunteers for the Ashantee war, they were asked to step forward, and the officer left them for a few minutes to decide. When he returned, the whole regiment was standing in line. "What, are there no volunteers?" The line was unbroken because the *whole* regiment had volunteered as one man. Christ's army is made up of volunteers, of *willers*, who do God's will "with a will," and do it well. "He who destroys his self-will destroys hell," says St. Bernard. The self-will of the evil angels made hell. The self-will of Adam opened and peopled hell. Luther voiced the spirit of angels when he wrote these bold words: "I do not ask Thy will be done, but my will be done. For Thy will is now my will, and I best get my own will by unquestioning acceptance of Thy will." Three hundred years

ago a great school of painters and sculptors coined a phrase which ran round the world; they said that they did their work *con amore*, with love. Let us be great artists and do God's work *con amore*. And let us do all of God's will; then may we say with David: "I shall not be ashamed when I have respect to *all* Thy commandments." Gabriel means "the man of God"; Michael means "who is like God"; let us be Gabriels to become Michaels.

Thy kingdom come, Thy will
In earth be done in love,
As saints and seraphim fulfil
Thy perfect law above.

Let us pray this prayer and practise this prayer until in heaven we sing, "Hallelujah! The kingdom is come, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

Our Father's Bread.

Give us this day our daily bread
And all that for this life we need;
From war and strife be our defense,
From famine and from pestilence,
That we may live in godly peace,
Unvexed by cares and avarice.

Luther.

"Give us this day our daily bread." — What has the matter of bread to do in this prayer? In the first three petitions we ask for spiritual things, in the last three petitions we ask for spiritual things, and in this middle petition we ask for *bread*! In the first petitions we ask for the hallowing of God's name, for the coming of His kingdom, for the doing of His will; in the last petitions we ask for forgiveness, for preservation in temptation, for deliverance from evil; and in this fourth and middle petition we ask for *bread*! Is that not out of place? Is that not an island of worldliness in an ocean of spirituality? Is it not a discord in the symphony? So it seems indeed; but if we dig beneath the surface, we shall see that this prayer is not, after all, so worldly, but rather a rebuke to worldliness, that it is an apple of gold in a basket of silver. Far from being concerned about mere bread, this petition is really very spiritual, teaching us childlike trust in God, utmost diligence and simplicity in our own living, and real charity toward our needy neighbor. Let us then consider

OUR FATHER'S BREAD.

I.

What It Is.

1. "Bread"; 2. "daily" bread; 3. daily bread "this day."

By "bread" we mean the staff of life, the chief article of food. On Greenland's icy mountains it may be the seal and the oil of fish; on India's coral strand it may be rice or the fruit of trees; among us it is what we usually call bread, the staple food. In our prayer the Lord does not mean to restrict us to this one article, but by a figure of speech He includes, as Luther has it, "everything that belongs to the support and wants of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, fields, cattle, money, goods, a pious spouse, pious children, pious servants, pious and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, discipline, honor, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like." According to Luther, "bread" is a term of deep meaning and wide sweep, yet he is altogether right, and the truth of his words lies so much upon the surface that no words need be spent to prove that all the things he mentions are really necessary to the procuring of bread, if not for every single person, yet for the world at large.

The famous statue of Laocoon, with his three sons, struggling in the coils of the awful serpents, is but a faint type of the world writhing in an

agony of hunger for bread. As the Danube flows through the very heart of Europe and pours itself into the Black Sea by its three mighty mouths, so the great stream of care and anxiety courses through the heart of humanity and pours itself into the Black Sea of misery by the three mouths of "What shall we eat? What shall we drink? Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" "Whence take we bread that these may eat?" The worried question of the Lord's disciples is ever the world's question.

"Give us this day our daily *bread*" — our Lord teaches us, but many would fain offer a substitute for that and make it read "cake." Yet our Lord knows what is best for us: the necessities of life, not the luxuries of high life. Bread, the "staff of life," we always need and never tire of; the luxuries we never need and soon tire of. The Prodigal jauntily left his father's house and on the gaudy wings of luxury soared among the highest of high life till he came to the level of low life — among swine. There he came to his senses, which he showed by longing for the bread in his father's house. In this life Dives hardly knew that water was fit to drink — only the best of wines were good enough for him; but when he was in torment, he begged for water, just plain water. Yes, when the truth is known, "Water is the best."

Clothing we need, that is true; we need it for warmth and decency and dignity; but must it be

"purple and fine linen"? Must our clothing be silk-finished, satin-lined, and built by the most artistic tailor-prince on the most fashionable avenue, where rents are extremely high? A house we need, true enough; but must it be "a poem in stone," like Sir Walter Scott's "Abbottsford"? Now, do you really *need* that diamond pin in your tie and that bric-a-brac on your mantel? We are to ask for necessities, not for luxuries. So we ought to eat nothing, drink nothing, wear nothing, furnish our house with nothing for which we cannot with good grace ask our Father in this Fourth Petition.

When Adam dalf and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman?

Adam did his work in the field and Eve in the tent; and for all their labor they had no luxuries to show. Abraham was a rich man in his day, yet he lived in a tent and roamed about in the world and lived mainly on fruit and flesh and milk, and clothed himself most likely in skins or coarse cloth. What do we need more than Adam and Abraham? Having a body, we need clothing to keep it warm; having life, we need food to sustain it. Having that, what more do we need? "We brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out"—isn't that true? If so, St. Paul is also right when he adds: "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content." 1 Tim. 6, 6—10. And why will you not be content? Look at the uncivilized hordes of

Africa — they are barely fed and scantily clad; look at the half-civilized hosts of Asia — their continued labor brings them but a mere pittance; look at the civilized millions of Europe and America — their toiling hands and sweating brows but prove the Creator's words spoken in Paradise: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread. Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." So your lot is that common to all humanity since the days of Adam, and the horny-handed son of toil is a walking and living proof of the truth of God and the sin of Adam.

Come, let us get to the bottom of the question. What is really the difference whether you eat your dinner off chinaware or Royal Worcester? What of it if your table is not mahogany, but only pine? You cannot walk on Axminsters, but only on a rag carpet — is that why your brow is furrowed with wrinkles? Your house is not on the square or avenue, but in some little back street — is that why your cheek is pale and haggard? Let me tell you, your misery does not come from the difference in the actual value of these things; your unhappiness comes from your vanity, from your pride, from your envy, from your jealousy! It is not because you really are in need of these things, but you want them because others have them; and you want to have them better or more of them to distance your rivals.

Stone walls do not a prison make
Nor iron bars a cage.

And Schiller sings:—

Room is in the smallest hut
For a happy, loving pair.

Happiness and unhappiness do not come from without, but from within. I have seen as much happiness in the sod house on the prairies of Dakota as in the gilded palace of our merchant princes; and I have seen as much wretchedness in the palace as in the hovel, and of all misery gilded misery is the most miserable. Like St. Paul, we should know “both to be full and to be hungry.” The golden mean — that is what we need. “Two things have I required of Thee; deny me them not before I die: Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be full and deny Thee and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor and steal and take the name of my God in vain.” Prov. 30, 7—9.

And history's calm voice confirms the wisdom of this prayer. The warlike Romans went out to conquer and were not satisfied till the subdued world lay at their triumphant feet. Powerful and rich, they let their swords become rust-eaten and gave themselves up to all sensual pleasures; they became the slaves of their ignoble appetites, became unnerved, and Alaric the Visigoth and Genseric the Vandal despoiled the proud mistress of the world. Wealth may be a boon or a bane, according to the use made of it; but most people cannot resist the insidious poison of glittering

gold, and for them it becomes a bane. As in the case of Rome, so in the case of other nations and cities and families and individuals, so that we mournfully muse on Goldsmith's polished lines: —

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay.

By all means, then, let us pray, "Give us this day our daily bread!" and consider, in the next place, what we mean when we ask for "daily" bread.

2. "Daily" is the translation of a word used by Christ, found nowhere else in all the 1,200 works of Greek literature which have come down to us. "Daily" bread seems to mean "the bread of our need," as the Persian version has it; "the bread according to our needs," as a Talmudic prayer has it. "The idea of fitness for a purpose and of actually serving it are united in the closest manner. 'Daily' designates that which is just enough," says Tholuck. Clement of Alexandria cleverly compares our bread to a shoe, which is uncomfortable if too large, painful if too small; it must just fit to be of service. So bread — "Feed me with food convenient for me," prays the wise Agur.

People wishing to win a prize in athletic sports "go into training," *i. e.*, they take such exercise, eat and drink such things as are best for them, and rigidly abstain from alcohol, nicotine, caffeine, pastry, and everything else that would weaken them. "Daily" bread is just such fare. Food of

such quality and in such quantity as will keep our body in the best condition, to do the most work in the least time with the least fatigue. A man near the North Pole needs other bread than the man near the Equator; heavy food which gives life to the man working outdoors in the sweat of his brow would give death to a man working indoors in the sweat of his brain; children need milk, adults need meat; the weak need toast, the robust want roast. The President has more needs than a policeman; a professional man more than a laborer; a man with a large family more than a man with a small family; a man in a metropolis more than a man in a village; a civilized man more than a savage — God does not want to put all men into a strait-jacket. When God bids us be charitable, He assumes that some must give help and some must receive help.

Though the words "daily bread" do not put all men upon an absolute level, they are none the less cutting. Needs may vary according to circumstances, but the principle is unbending: bread as we need it for our life. We are never to abuse it by shiftless, thriftless squandering or by a vulgar rivalry and flaunting display. This competition in wasteful shiftlessness on the part of the poor and this competition in vain rivalry of display on the part of the rich, paralyzes the people's prosperity, and the only sure cure is a speedy return to the spirit of the prayer for "daily bread."

Epicures, ancient and modern, pamper the

body; they are gluttons, gross or refined, — “whose god is their belly” is the terse and telling language of Paul. “We had two common parents, Adam and Noah, and one failed by eating and the other by drinking. These sins are natural to us. The throat is a slippery place and had need be looked unto,” quaintly observes Manton.

The Stoic regarded the body as a hindrance to be ignored and deadened its demands, while the monk punished the body for the sins of the soul. There is a materialism that makes the body everything; there is a spiritualism that makes the body nothing: the one sins by too much feasting, the other sins by too much fasting. In the golden mean, between the two extremes, soberly walks Christianity, “clothed and in her right mind.” She makes provision for the body, but not to fulfil the lusts thereof. The body is the home of the soul and “the temple of the Holy Ghost,” therefore it should be honored accordingly that we may glorify God in our body, that, whether we eat or whether we drink, we may do all to the glory of God. Frivolous feasting and fanatical fasting is to be shunned by the true Christian, that it may be said of us as they said of the first Christians, “They did eat their meat with gladness and with singleness of heart.”

3. We are to ask for our daily bread “this day,” as St. Matthew has it, or “day by day,” as St. Luke gives it; the meaning is the same: “St. Matthew touches the readiness, St. Luke

touches the steadiness; St. Matthew the promptitude, St. Luke the patience of God's supply."

"Bread" we want — in a fair quantity; "daily" bread we want — of a proper quality; "this day" or "day by day" we want the bread — in the right season. We do not pray for yesterday's bread, stale and moldy, *i. e.*, we are not to look back upon our troubles and thus become chronic grumblers. We do not pray for to-morrow's bread, doughy and unfit; *i. e.*, we are not to peer into the future and become visionaries or else pessimists. We pray for "daily bread," "this day" and "day by day," as we are ready to eat it. A heart full of bitterness about *yesterday's* bread and troubles and an anxious and fretful mind about *to-morrow's* bread and troubles both alike hinder us from doing our full work in the proper manner *to-day*. God lays a certain burden on us every day, and sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. In addition to this day's burden we want to carry yesterday's burden and also to-morrow's burden. By wanting to do too much, we do not do enough. What with growing sour and bitter about yesterday's trouble and growing nervous and fretful about to-morrow's trouble, I cannot with a clear eye and steady nerve attend to to-day's duties as I should. "Live out, truly and nobly, the life of each day, day by day. Not an attempted supernatural life, for you are a man, not an angel; not a wicked life, for you are a man and not a fiend; not a sensual life, for you are a man and not a beast; not a frivolous life,

for you are a man and not an insect. But live each day the true life of a man to-day. Not yesterday's life only, lest you become a murmurer; not to-morrow's, lest you become a visionary; but the life of to-day, with happy yesterdays and confident to-morrows."

Christ bids us, "Take no thought for the morrow," but some people go beyond this and do not take thought even for to-day. They exist, they do not live; their life is more animal than rational. These words are no warrant for a careless, go-as-you-please mode of life, spending money as soon as made, without a thought for the proverbial "rainy day" — no, not at all. But it is a rebuke to borrowing trouble from the future, a rebuke to the care, anxiety, worry, and fretting that furrows the brows, and pinches the cheek, and lines the mouth, and haggards the eye. By this prayer Christ rebukes the unbelief in God when He mercifully promises, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Deut. 33, 25. This petition is a protest against those that do not believe Christ when He says: "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." "The Lord knoweth the days of the upright, and their inheritance shall be forever. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied." Ps. 37, 18. 19. This petition says in prayer the same that David says in praise: "The eyes of all wait upon Thee, and Thou givest them their meat in due season.

Thou openest Thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." Ps. 145, 15. The best explanation of "this day" is given by Christ Himself when He says, Matt. 6, 25—34: "Take no thought for your life," etc. Our Lord bids us pray for our bread "this day." Thereby He does not frown down foresight, but He would break the fever of speculation, the reckless scheming for money, the haste to get rich; He would check the mad race after wealth. These booms and schemes take business from the normal, solid, sound foundation and put it on stilts, so that a dispatch or a cablegram can cause a "run" and a crash and create widespread disaster. If we all lived in the spirit of this prayer "this day," business would be solid, and financial cyclones and business stagnation and industrial depressions would soon be unknown.

The prayer for bread "this day" is plainly very proper for the poor, who live from hand to mouth. Such poverty certainly has its special trials, yet it will tend to make such people rich in faith and trustful in their dependence on God's bounty. Such people put their bread in God's keeping and draw on Him for their daily supply, as a depositor draws on his bank account, who thinks his money safer in the bank than in his own pocket.

The prayer for bread "this day" is just as proper for the wealthy. Earthquakes, cyclones, fires, floods, droughts, plagues, epidemics, strikes, rebellions, wars, discoveries, inventions, and many other things may take away a part or all of their

investments and make their securities worth less than the paper they are written on.

Life is uncertain for poor and rich alike, and therefore the prayer for bread "this day" is proper for all sorts and conditions of men. Our lease may run out any time, and notice to quit may come at once — "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be?" was said to the man who trusted in the "much goods laid up for many years." Luke 12, 16—21.

One year's crop is never for two years' food, and so we all depend on God's bounty "this day" and "day by day," just as truly as the Israelites in the desert for their manna.

II.

How Gotten?

1. By God's operation; 2. by man's cooperation.

The old heathens said the great goddess Ceres gave them the seed and taught them how to turn it into bread, and for that reason the bread-giving grains were called *cereals*. We Christians know that our bread is "manna," bread from heaven, God's gift.

Pharaoh's wise men could do many of the miracles of Moses, but at the lice they had to exclaim, "This is the finger of God." So our wise men can do many things bordering on the miraculous, but when it comes to anything having life, they are baffled; they have found the "finger

of God." And so with all his great wisdom and with all his wonderful skill, man cannot produce a single kernel of wheat. It is the gift of God. Man must place this kernel of wheat into the soil to make it grow, but he cannot produce the soil. He can enrich it, he can impoverish it, but he cannot produce it. That also is the gift of God. The tiny kernel being planted, it is left alone in all the boundless universe. Alone, alone, all, all alone, alone in the wide, wide world. Only God can take care of it. It needs rain, but if it have too much, it will rot; it needs sunshine, but if it have too much, it will wither. God must give both, and give in due proportion and in due time. God must protect the tender blade from the fly; God must protect the bearded grain from the weevil; God must protect the stored grain from the moth and the mold.

We plow the fields and scatter the good seed in the land,
But it is fed and watered by God's almighty hand;
He sends the snow in winter, the warmth to swell the
grain,
The breezes and the sunshine and soft, refreshing rain.
All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above;
Then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord for all His love!

2. So far bread is clearly a direct gift of God, a product of God's operation. Now comes in another factor, human cooperation. The miner must mine coal and iron ore, so that the iron worker may produce iron and the mechanic in the cities build machinery, that the grain may be mowed, bound, threshed, ground, that the railroads and

ships may bring it to the consumer. Thus the country works for the city, and the city works for the country; the whole complex machinery of the world is put into motion to give "bread to the eater." And in order to do this, it is easy to see that we need "fields, cattle, pious servants, good government, good weather, peace, health, honor, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like." None but God can give these things, and so every one, rich and poor, has need to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread."

Behind the bread the snowy flour,
Behind the flour the mill;
Behind the mill the growing wheat
Nods on the breezy hill;
Over the wheat is the glowing sun
Ripening the heart of the grain;
Above the sun is the gracious God,
The Giver of sunlight and rain.

Yea, verily, bread is the gift of God. You go to the bakery and for a few pennies buy a loaf of bread. So you imagine. Is it really so? Not at all. That loaf of bread is in every respect a free gift of God to you. God gave seed, soil, and sun. Your few pennies pay the farmer for putting the seed into the soil, for reaping and threshing it; your few pennies pay the miller for grinding, the railroad for hauling, the baker for baking. God gave you the bread, you pay others for bringing it to you. God gives you a living; all you do is to collect it or to pay others to collect it for you. God gave the manna, the

Jews had to gather it. So the word "give" is no flowery bed of ease on which we lie, supinely waiting for God to let manna drop or the ravens to come. God gives bread; and so we must pray for it; God gives it in the raw state, and so we must work for it. *Ora et labora*, that is, Pray and work. Without prayer we steal our bread from God; without work we steal our bread from man. We trust in God, we also keep our powder dry, as the old general advised his soldiers. Prayer for bread and work for bread are not like oil and water that will not mix, but twins, one lovingly supporting the other, one emphasizing the other and showing each one to be in earnest. "Study to be quiet and to do your own business and to work with your own hands as we commanded you, that ye may walk honorably toward those that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing." 1 Thess. 4, 11. 12. "If any one will not work, neither let him eat. For we hear that there are some among you who are walking disorderly, working not at all, but being busybodies. Now, them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ that with quietness they work and eat their own bread." 2 Thess. 3, 10—12. And experience shows that giving money and bread and fuel and clothing only increases the evil it would cure, spreads pauperism instead of checking it, and that true charity to the poor is to give them work, so that they may earn and eat their own bread.

This petition teaches true nobility and manly independence: our daily bread, not the bread of some one else; bread which we have earned, not which we receive as alms, and earned by honest toil, for which we have given to the world something in return, be it by the labor of our hands or of our heads, by tongue or pen, by pencil or brush, something useful or something beautiful. We pray that we may not get our living as a beast of prey by robbing or cheating our neighbor, nor as a parasite on the social body, as a tramp. "A noble heart," says Barrow, "will disdain to subsist like a drone, on the honey gained by others' labor; or, like vermin, to filch its food from the public granary; or, like the shark, to prey on the lesser fry; but will, one way or another, earn his subsistence; for he that doth not earn can hardly own his bread. When we say, 'Give us our daily bread,' we pray, even in that one word, that we may live lives of happy industry and honest aim." So when we pray, Give bread, we pray, Give power and opportunity and the good will to work for it, to gather the manna in the appointed way, that we may truthfully repeat the manly words of Paul: "Neither did we eat any man's bread for naught, but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you; not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us." 2 Thess. 3, 8. 9.

III.

How to be Received?

1. With a grateful heart toward our God.
2. With a charitable hand toward our neighbor.

"God gives daily bread indeed without our prayer, also to all the wicked; but we pray in this petition that He would lead us to know it and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving."

Ah, yes, and that is an important truth for our day; for most people rule God out of all reckoning. Many men are "self-made," and they religiously worship their maker. Men look upon themselves as the authors and finishers of their salvation; with their own right hand they carve out their fortune, with their own ingenuity they mold their destinies. With them everything is regulated by the law of supply and demand, by the law of the survival of the fittest, and by the law of stern necessity, with no wise and loving Father overhead. And so, when it is well with them, they pat themselves on the shoulder, they do themselves proud, and, like Nebuchadnezzar, say with great self-satisfaction: "Is this not great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power and for the honor of my majesty?" Dan. 4, 30. True, many things lend countenance to such a materialistic view. God sends His rain on the wicked and on the godly; He lets His sun shine on the just and on the unjust. They whose lips drop with curses have bread as well as they who send up a trustful

prayer. And yet there is a vast difference between these two classes. The state gives bread to its heroic soldiers and sailors, it also gives bread to the culprits in prison; and yet there is a great difference in the manner of giving. They who do not thank God are like the waifs and gamins on the streets of the world who pick up what they can get and have no home. The Christians sit down as dear children at the table of their heavenly Father and trustfully look to Him to supply all their needs and thankfully receive what is set before them; for every creature of God is good and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer. 1 Tim. 4, 4. 5. And so their eating and drinking is also to the glory of God. 1 Cor. 10, 31. Of those who do not pray some one sharply said: "Carnal men are like swine, who raven upon the acorns, but look not to the oak whence they drop."

The Lord warns, "Say not in thine heart, 'My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.' But thou shalt remember the Lord, thy God; for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth." Deut. 8, 17. He fed thee with manna, that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by everything that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord. The Lord complains of the ungrateful and says: "This people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone. Neither say

they in their heart, Let us now fear the Lord, our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season; He reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest." Jer. 5, 23. 24. "She did not know that I gave her corn and wine and oil and multiplied her silver and gold which they prepared for Baal." Hos. 2, 8.

If the Lord accuses the people that merely neglect to thank Him of having a "revolting and a rebellious heart," what will He say of those that actually grumble at His gifts and despise them? But who is guilty of such a crime? All those who are dissatisfied with their lot, who are envious of their neighbors, who are always complaining of hard times, who are always greedy and grasping for more to gorge themselves fuller. As we pray for "bread," let us be thankful for "bread."

Sometimes God sends a famine to force people to think whence their welfare has been coming. Sometimes a financial cyclone arises, we know not whence; it lasts, we know not how long; it goes, we know not whither; so that, as sometimes in our days, the harvests are large, the general health is good, men are sought for work, and yet hard times stalk like specters through the land and paralyze the spirit of progress. Then it is as the prophet says: "Consider your ways. Ye have sown much and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes." Hag. 1, 5. 6.

Though we eat our bread in the sweat of our brow or brain, let us never forget to ask a blessing and to return thanks. What can be more beautiful than the family surrounding the spread table to ask Jesus to be our Table-guest in the beautiful prayer:—

Come, Lord Jesus, be our Guest,
And let these gifts to us be blessed. Amen.

The skeptic may smile, and the worldling may sneer — what of it? Christ said grace before feeding the four thousand; Christ said grace before feeding the five thousand; Christ said grace before the supper at Emmaus; Christ said grace before instituting the heavenly banquet of the Lord's Supper — and will you be ashamed of doing what Christ has taught you to do? "He that enjoys aught without thanksgiving is as though he robbed God," says the Talmud. To forget that our blessings come from God and to neglect to thank Him for them, Mr. Gladstone believes "to be the most inexpressible calamity which can fall either upon a man or upon a nation." Every time we eat a piece of bread we are God's guests; let us not forget our "company manners." Let us be like the early Christians. "They did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God." Acts 2, 46. 47. We say with Burns —

Some hae meat wha canna eat,
And some wad eat wha want it,
But we hae meat, and we can eat,
So let the Lord be thankit.

Receiving our daily bread with thanksgiving to God, the Giver, will keep us from abusing His gifts. One of the places visited by Israel in the wilderness is called *Kibroth Hataavah*, the Graves of Lust, because many died there of overeating. Many "graves of lust" are filled with gluttony, drunkenness, and other overindulgence.

As they who ask to be forgiven must themselves also forgive, so they who ask to be given must themselves also give. As Christ gave the multiplied loaves and fishes to a few that they might give to the many, so God generally gives a plenty to a few that they might distribute to many needy and thus act as God's commissary department. "Charge them that are rich in this world that they . . . do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." 1 Tim. 6, 17—19. During our Civil War thousands of prisoners were kept in a place enclosed by a high fence. Each day food was carried within the gates, enough for them all; but no attempt was made at equal distribution. So it came that the strong and selfish made a rush at the common store and took more than their due share, while many of the sick and wounded received nothing at all. Morning after morning scores of corpses were carried out. Had these soldiers shared their bread, all would have had enough, and none would have died of hunger.

So it is with men on earth. We are a community, and God provides for all in common, and we are to distribute the common gift to all in common, that each may get his due share. If one kind of food fail, another crop is the more plentiful to make up the shortage; if the harvest in one country is poor, the harvest in another is rich, so that a balance and an average may be struck and all receive enough, and not one suffer from scarcity and another suffer from surfeit. God sends enough for all His children that there may be no want among any of His children. If a man told you a tale of woe about his starving wife and children, and you gave him a dollar, and he spent it for pies or whisky for himself and let his family suffer, how would you feel toward that man? Just so, only in a perfect way, God feels toward us when we squander His gifts on our own selves and do not help to ease the suffering of the needy.

Christ bids us ask for *our* bread. We all are companions, — *cum*, together, and *panis*, bread, — we have our bread together, we are *breadfellows*.

The rich squander, waste, and destroy more than enough to keep the needy. A little oil of kindly thoughtfulness would do much towards hushing the creaking and groaning machinery of this world and make it run smoothly. Christ's parable of Dives, dressed in purple and fine linen and faring sumptuously every day, while Lazarus, full of sores, lay at the door hungering for the few crumbs that fell from the table, is dramatized

on a large scale in real life every day. Look closely at the flashing diamonds of the rich, and you will often see in their brilliancy the glistening of the crystallized tears of the anguished. Look at the revelers feasting at the sumptuous banquet. Rich and rare is the meat, for they are cannibals, sucking the strength out of the flesh and marrow of the laborer. See them stimulating their jaded nerves by copious draughts of champagne. Look beneath the surface, and you will see that they drink the blood and sweat pressed from the poor victims they have crushed under the iron heel of competition.

The Bible says: "Look not every one on his own things, but every one also on the things of others"; again: "Whoso hath this world's goods and seeth his brother have need and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" Phil. 2, 4; 1 John 3, 17. The early Christians really believed this to be God's will, and they lived up to it. "They sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men, as every man had need. . . . Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the prices of the things that were sold, . . . and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." Of the disciples of Antioch every man, according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea; which also they did. Acts

2, 45; 4, 34. 35; 11, 29. The Macedonians in "their deep poverty" helped "to their power, yea, and beyond their power," "willing of themselves." 2 Cor. 8, 1—4. That is the right kind of Communism and Socialism and Fraternalism.

Give *us* this day *our* daily bread. We are not to pray at the street-corners as did the Pharisees, but we are to pray to our Father in secret. But praying in secret, we are to take the whole world with us into our chamber and lay it before the Throne of Mercy so that all its needs may be supplied. Jacob did not want to see the face of Judah unless he brought Benjamin with him, and so our Father does not wish to hear or see us unless we bring our brother with us in our prayer. If we really believe God is our Father and we His children, we must necessarily believe our neighbor is His child also, and if so, he must be our brother. The sense of childhood connects with the sense of brotherhood. Men may doubt whether they be their brother's keeper; they cannot doubt being their brother's brother. And being his brother's brother and seeing his brother have need, and if he shutteth up the bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? "If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say to them, 'Depart in peace; be ye warmed and filled,' notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful for the body, what doth it profit?" Jas. 2, 15. 16.

When speaking of the word "bread," we preached contentment to the poor; now speaking of the word "us" and "our," we just as earnestly preach mercy, justice, and charity to the rich. Woe unto those who have not the great gain of godliness with contentment, but also woe unto those who will not deal their bread to the hungry nor visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction and keep themselves unspotted from the world! If the healthy do not work, what is to become of the sick? If the strong do not work, what is to become of the tender young or feeble aged?

Told that the people cried for bread, the queen sharply replied, "Then why don't they buy cake?" Soon after, the terrible French Revolution destroyed the whole royal family. If this spirit is shown by our rich people, a terrible revolution will surely destroy them.

The world is full of discontent; it always has been; but in our day, the telegraph netting the world and the cheap newspaper coming into every home, that fact becomes generally known. In Spain they throw bombs, in France they throw bombs, in Italy they rise in arms, in Germany they strike, in England they strike, in our own country strikes are ordered every now and then; yes, sullen unrest is the order of the day. And it must be granted with the utmost frankness and candor that there is very much room for complaint; on the one hand, millions are piling upon

millions; on the other, mortgages are piling upon mortgages. And the world seems to have formed itself into a committee of the whole devising ways and means for equalizing the inequalities. The world is full of orators, and lecturers, and authors, and editors, and legislators, each one a voice crying in the wilderness: "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight and the rough places plain!" But, alas! their efforts are mostly in vain. Laws cannot do away with these evils, cannot even do much to relieve them. No law can reach the seat of the trouble; only a spirit can touch and heal it, the spirit of brotherhood shown by our Elder Brother, who left even His life for the brethren. By His suffering and death Christ became the Mediator between God and man; by His example in life He became the Mediator also between man and man. His example ought always to be the standard by which all differences are straightened out. Christianity is the only solvent of all social troubles.

Do you retort that it will do to preach this on Sunday, but not to practise this on Monday; that it is a fine theme for unctuous declamation in the pulpit, but not for sober practise in the office, shop, and factory; that it is the material out of which Utopian dreamers weave the web of airy theories, but unworthy a moment's notice on the part of the practical man of affairs? You

are wrong. Extremes meet. Here, too, the loftiest ideal is the most practical scheme. The preacher and the politician may, nay, must, go hand in hand. By precept Christ has told the world how to get along in the best possible way, and by practise He has illustrated His preaching. That should be enough for us, and we should follow both. In addition to the authoritative words and works of Christ to lead us, eminent men heartily endorse Christ's lofty ideal as the most workable scheme. Gladstone said to Talmage: "Talk about questions of the day; there is but one question, and that is the Gospel. It can and will correct everything needing correction. All men at the head of great movements are Christian men. During the many years I was in the cabinet I was brought into association with sixty master minds, and all but five of them were Christians. My only hope for the world is in bringing the human mind into contact with divine revelation." And he said this, not when green from Oxford University, but when, "an old Parliamentary hand," he had repeatedly as Prime Minister swayed the destinies of the mighty British Empire and earned for himself the enviable title of the "Grand Old Man." Our own old Senator John Sherman, in a Fourth of July oration at Washington Monument, referring to the labor troubles, said, "If each side recognized the right of the other and applied the Golden Rule, there would be no more disorders and strikes." Exactly so; and you agree with it as a grand

theory, but not reducible to practise. Is it even so? Ponder this:—

An anecdote told at a memorial service for the late Geo. W. Childs, of Philadelphia, by the Typographical Union, illustrates the relations between him and his employees. Depression in the publishing business resulted in a voluntary reduction of rates by the Typesetters' Union in Pennsylvania. The leader stated to Mr. Childs that its members had resolved to lower the price to so much per thousand ems. "It will be hard on us and on our families. But we see how depressed the publishing business is. We want to do the right thing." "I am now, I believe, paying five cents per thousand ems more than the price you have agreed upon?" said the publisher. "Yes." "I am making reasonable profit with that. I shall continue to pay it. I, too, want to do the right thing."

He continued to pay it, at an annual cost of twelve thousand dollars. When other publishers remonstrated, he said: "The work is worth the amount paid. I still make reasonable profit." Discussing the Chicago-Virden riot, the *New York Times* of October 14, 1898, holds that a corporation lacks brains as well as heart if it cannot gain and retain the good-will of the employed.

Our Father's Forgiveness.

Lord, all our trespasses forgive,
That they our hearts no more may grieve,
As we forgive their trespasses
Who unto us have done amiss;
Thus let us dwell in charity
And serve each other willingly.—*Luther.*

I.

Why Needed?

Some enemies accuse the Christian religion of casting a dense veil of gloom over the world. They say, the heathen live in a natural, healthy, happy frame of mind, in a state of innocent enjoyment of life; and the Bible tells them they are sinners and under the wrath of God. A double falsehood. The heathen know they are sinners, "their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." Rom. 2, 15. And the heathen try to get forgiveness of sin and peace of conscience, and often resort to the most outrageous means. They torture themselves in the most cruel manner, they kill and burn their relatives, they roast alive their infants in the fiery arms of Moloch. A soul aroused to the knowledge of having sinned against God will go to any length in order to turn aside His anger and punishment. Egyptian obelisk, Grecian temple, Mohammedan mosque, Christian cathedral: all bear witness that the sense of guilt

is in every conscience, that all men ask, "What must I do to be saved?" It is the glory of the Christian religion that it gives the one clear and sufficient answer and dispels the gloom of sin by the bright rays of hope in the Gospel, offering free forgiveness by the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ.

Having no Savior, man is ready to torture himself to satisfy an angry God whom by his sins he has tortured. Even where the Gospel is preached, but not in its fulness and purity, men are naturally led to seek peace in works of righteousness which their own hands have done. Never knowing for a certainty if they have fully satisfied God, a sense of fear haunts them at all times, and heavy clouds of doubt cling to them and cast a gloom over the soul. Hence the Roman Catholic Church is the church of the "Miserere" and the "Dies Irae," of sorrow and contrition, of fasting and penance. But where, as in the truly Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Gospel is preached in all its fulness and sweetness, where men are not pointed to their own good works, but to the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from all sin, there we hear the glad and joyful notes of the tuneful Hallelujahs. For Christ has not given us the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, "Abba, Father!" For Christ's sake God is our Father, and we are His children. 'Tis true, we are guilty children, and for that reason we crave our Father's forgiveness.

Some say, Christians ought not pray the Lord's Prayer, since they have no sins, having been forgiven through faith in Christ. "Our Lord said to Peter, 'He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit,' again, St. John says, 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin!'" True; true also that the same apostle says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." 1 John 1, 8. Plainly these people mix up two very distinct truths, namely, justification and sanctification. When a sinner believes in Christ, the sinner is freed from his debt, at once and altogether, but he is not freed from temptation to sin again. Justification is perfect, sanctification is imperfect. In justification we are washed perfectly clean in the blood of Christ, in sanctification the leaven must work and leaven the whole lump. St. Paul says, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already made perfect. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The higher a Christian climbs the mount of holiness, the stronger his eyes become to see sins; the tenderer his conscience to be pained by them; the softer his heart to grieve over them; the readier to fly to the Father for forgiveness. "I write unto you that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an

Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." "There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not," but the just man does not remain in his sin, but rises from sin in repentance. Swine wallow in mire; sheep may stumble into mire, but at once hurry out. The ancient Romans lost many battles, but they never lost a war; the Christian may fall into a sin, but he will not let it become a habit. The truth that a Christian may sin will tend to keep him watchful: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Be the sins ever so little, they need to be repented of, or they will grow to great proportions. A small leak, if not mended, will sink a ship; grains of sand, if multiplied, will form a mountain. Forgiveness is to be asked ere the harm is become great; the stains are to be removed ere they become indelible.

Trespases. — "And forgive us our debts," Matthew has it, 6, 12, and St. Luke gives it, 11, 4, "And forgive us our sins." And what are our debts? "Be ye holy, for I the Lord, your God, am holy." "Be ye perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the prophets." Matt. 22, 37—40. "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that

which was our duty to do." Luke 17, 10. So we owe God everything, and that everywhere, and that all the time. If then we omit but one single thing, or fail but one part of a second, we can never in all eternity make up for lost time! What arrant nonsense, then, to prate of doing enough good works to make up for the evil done in the past!

O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason!

"Give, O ye gods, give me my dues!" cried Apollonius of Tyana. But we need not go to ancient heathens to find this folly. The heathens of Christendom are about us, and we can hear this twaddle to-day. Sinful man, shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin, and since living in sin, talks of meriting aught by good works, talks as if in a position to be generous to his Maker, the great God of heaven. No, we are God's children, and owe a child's duty, and in the very nature of the relationship we can never in all eternity strip off this obligation. This is our duty as man. When we fall short in the full performance of our whole duty, we fall in arrears, into debt, and we ought to make good the deficit. This is our duty as fallen man. And how manifold and numerous are these debts! Original sin and actual sin; sins of weakness and sins of malice; conscious sins and unconscious sins; sins of doing the forbidden and sins of not doing the commanded; sins of youth and sins of age; sins against those under us, and sins against those over us, and sins against those

equal to us; sins in family, sins in business, sins in politics, sins in church; sins against self, sins against neighbors, sins against God. Besides all these sins, whose name is legion, there is *the* one great sin of unbelief, the sin of rejecting "the unspeakable gift" of God in Christ Jesus, the sin of "neglecting so great salvation," the sin of spiritual self-destruction.

The leprosy of sin has tainted us altogether, there is no sound spot left; the enemy has riddled us with sin, the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it, yea, even our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. So speaks the voice of God in the Scriptures, and the voice of God in our conscience says, Yea and Amen.

Yes, conscience speaks with a warning voice. It may be a feeble voice, and we may disregard it for a time by giving chase to fleet-footed pleasure; we may bribe it for awhile with ambition's laurel wreath; if it becomes strong and stormy, we may soothe it with the opiate of reckless dissipation. Yet it will awake anon, and in the silence of a sleepless night conscience will conjure up with terrible distinctness the phantom forms of sins long past which sit upon our breast like a nightmare and stop our very breathing. Even when the morning sun with his golden beams makes search in our room, we cannot throw off our conscience, it will go with us as a hostile witness to the judgment bar of God. An old Egyp-

tian inscription reads, "O heart, my heart, that I have received from my mother and had in the earthly life, do not rise as a witness against me! Do not accuse me before God!"

Our trespasses, or debts, are charged up to us in God's records. "The books were opened, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Memory may fail, the recording angel does not forget.

Again, our sins record themselves automatically upon our conscience, just as a speedometer registers every turn of the automobile and counts the number of miles, or as a turnstile counts the number of admissions. An accused man tried to prove an alibi, but a detective produced a snapshot proving the man to have been there; so conscience photographs us and produces the proof of guilt, and we shall not be able to make denial.

Our debts also bear interest, and if not promptly canceled by sincere sorrow and the blood of Christ, they will bear compound interest. That is to say, every sin is a debt, and failure to repent of it is an added sin. If a man cannot or will not pay his debt, he naturally shuns his creditor, and this is often more irritating to the creditor than the non-payment of the debt. As it is between man and man, so between man and God — "Only acknowledge thine iniquity, and I will not cause Mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful." Jer. 3, 13. 12.

These debts can never be paid; in the very nature of the case it is impossible. We are God's children, and we can never escape from the relationship and the duties it involves. Everywhere, all the time, all our powers and faculties belong to God; therefore, if we could in the future be perfect, that would not make up for the fact that in the past we have been imperfect. "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do." We cannot compromise with the Creditor, nor pay back dues by instalments. The Indian chief was much surprised that his finest Wampum was not accepted by the merchants of New York; our best works are not accepted as current coin of the realm with God.

These debts cannot be transferred. The Church has no savings bank in which specially holy men can deposit their surplus good works and sell or give to those who are short in their accounts with God. "None can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; (for the redemption of their soul is costly, and must be let alone forever)." Ps. 49, 7. (Revised Version.)

These debts do not lapse in a certain number of years. On earth there is a "Statute of Limitations," by which a debt is canceled after a certain period, though it has not been paid. Not so in heaven; in his old age David prayed, "Remember not the sins of my youth."

These debts cannot be escaped by a change of residence. When there is no "Extradition Treaty," certain criminals can escape punishment by fleeing from one country to another. Not so with God; the arm of His law reaches everywhere and relentlessly pursues the fugitive and brings him to book. "Whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I take the wings of the morning and dwell at the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Thy hand shall lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me."

These debts cannot be escaped by death. On earth death discharges all debt. Not so with God; with Him it is the last summons for payment. "Death is God's arrest."

These debts do not admit of a "Change of Venue." On earth a prisoner often tries to escape punishment by having his trial transferred from one county to another. Not so with God; with Him there is only one bar of justice, and from His decision no appeal can be taken: He is the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

These debts are real debts. They are not nominal debts, recorded, but never to be exacted. The Lord may tarry long, and we may be lulled into the belief He has forgotten us. Not so. "After a long time the Lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them." "Give an account of thy stewardship." "Be not deceived, God is not mocked." These debts are enormous, for the sins have been committed against the infinite and majestic God of heaven.

Our debts are ours exclusively, without subtraction, division, or partnership. Adam tried to blame Eve, Eve tried to blame the serpent; some one else may be the tempter, I myself am the sinner. Our debts are ours completely and intensely. Hercules wore the poisoned shirt of Nessus; warmed by his body, it grew into his flesh; he tried to tear it off, he only tore himself, and soon died in agony. Sin is our Nessus shirt. "Nothing is so much our own as our sins," says Augustine. Christ is the only one to separate our sins from our souls.

II.

How Asked?

When we desire forgiveness of our sins, the important question is, How are we to ask for it?

1. Knowledge of sin is the first thing needful. Our sins are "our" sins. We must manfully shoulder the responsibility. We must not, like Adam, shift it on Eve; not, like Eve, shift it on the Serpent. The Serpent did the tempting, but, after all, Adam and Eve did the eating. We must not plead our helplessness; weakness excuses no wickedness. We must not try to hide behind our temper, our education, our companions, or even the devil. They may have tempted us with the apple, but we did the eating; we consented with our will and thus made the sin our very own. Having enjoyed the apple, let us now also swallow the ashes. False humility always pleads helpless-

ness, poses as betrayed innocence, and blames others; true humility confesses the inborn love for evil and the perverted will to do evil.

Furthermore, ignorance of the law excuses no one, and it is our solemn duty to search the Law of God that we may know the worst once for all and realize just how enormous is our debt to God. We must not try to stave off the disagreeable, but face it now, and face it unflinchingly.

2. After we have a knowledge of our sin, we must acknowledge our sin. If God is to hide our sins, we must not hide them. God cannot cancel our debt if we do not first acknowledge the obligation, as a physician cannot heal a wound unless we show it to him. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper." "I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin."

If there is a burden on our soul, we find relief in telling it to some one: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." If we are really sorry we have harmed our neighbor, we will not be slow in telling him. "Confess your faults one to another." Jas. 5, 16. Sorrow for sin must come before pardon for sin.

Many people acknowledge their sin, but do not sorrow for it. As criminals are sorry when caught, so these people are sorry when they suffer; but as the criminal is sorry, not for his crime, but for being caught, so these people are not sorry for their sin, but simply for the fact that they must suffer

the consequences of their sin. Many a man in sickness says he is sorry for his sins, but when the sickness is over, his sorrow also is at an end. Godly sorrow grieves over the sin itself as an evil, as rebellion against the Lord, as grieving the Holy Spirit, as unthankfulness to the heavenly Father, as contempt for the suffering of the Savior. Many a boy would rather take a flogging at school than have his mother grieved by a recital of the son's misdeed. Godly sorrow willingly takes the suffering in consequence of sin; what it grieves over is the sin itself. The Christian is more hurt by sinfulness than by suffering. "Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." Job 42, 6. The publican "would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, 'God be merciful to me, a sinner.'" The prodigal did not plead sonship and ask to be treated as a son; if only forgiven, he would gladly be a servant. That he had been a "persecutor and injurious" haunted Paul all his life; the wound was healed, the scar remained.

If we have a sincere sorrow for our sin, we will not put off to some convenient time our prayer for forgiveness. "To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." "Behold, now is the day of salvation." If men will live in sin, trusting that like the penitent thief they can reform in the eleventh hour, they prove themselves insincere and also very foolish. Repentance is the work of God, and it cannot be called to the bedside as the doctor

can be called. Besides, men never know their eleventh hour.

Through the large end of a telescope the objects look very small and very distant; through the small end the objects look very large and very near. Satan tries to get us to look at our sins as through the large end and makes the sins appear small and distant, mere trifles, so as to get us to commit more or to put off or neglect asking for pardon. Then he makes our sin appear so enormous that we doubt God's mercy, sink into despair, and say, "Mine iniquity is greater than that it may be forgiven," and again fail to ask God's pardon.

True repentance is not a sudden regret for past sins, not a sudden fear of future punishments, but a complete change of heart. Is it easier to cure after the sickness has developed and the patient is weakened? Is it easier to fight the fire after it has gotten a good start? Is it easier to control the flooded Mississippi after it has worn large holes in the levees? Must you begin to row only when the boat is about to shoot over the Niagara Falls? Must you first lose strength ere you make the effort of your life? All this sheer folly is the height of wisdom in comparison to putting off your repentance until the eleventh hour. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest." Until you have gotten right with God, "give not sleep to thine eyes nor slumber to thine eyelids." "Deliver thy-

self as a roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler." Luther wisely said there were three things he did not dare think of without Christ: Sin, Death, Judgment.

In order rightly to seek forgiveness, we must sincerely purpose to improve. Sorrow for sin comes only after we have learned utterly to hate sin. Every prayer for pardon is also a pledge of reformation, and every forgiveness is an argument for holiness. Every favor on God's part must increase gratitude on our part. If God can forgive us only at the expense of the precious blood of Christ, we must learn that sins are very costly, and we must shun them accordingly. "He will speak peace unto His people and to His saints; but let them not turn again to folly." "Let the wicked forsake his way, and let him return unto the Lord, for He will abundantly pardon." "Wash you, make you clean; cease to do evil; learn to do well." "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world."

When you seek forgiveness, seek not for self alone, but also for your brother. Sue, but intercede as well as sue. "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." Take all sinful mankind with you to the Father's throne and say, "Forvive *us our* trespasses." If you are to show charity in asking

bread for your brother, much more are you to show charity in asking forgiveness for his sins, in looking out for his spiritual welfare as well as for his bodily welfare. Include the sins of mankind in your petition, and your sins will be included in the petitions of all that offer up the Lord's Prayer. And while you pray for all mankind in general, pray particularly for your own personal enemies, who have hated and harmed you, against whom you had a grudge in your heart. The spirit of your prayer is to be found in the words of the ancient Liturgy: —

“To forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, and to turn their hearts, we beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.”

Our prayer is to be according to Christ's direction: “Bless them that curse you, pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.” Matt. 5, 44. Thus are we to fulfil the law of Christian love.

III.

How Gotten?

Socrates doubted whether sin could be forgiven; and well he might. Nature is under the “reign of law,” and the laws of Nature are stern and relentless. “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” “Men do not gather figs from thorns.” Break the laws of health, and you will have sickness; disregard the laws of society, and you will have social disgrace; violate the laws of

the government, and you will have legal penalty; outrage your conscience, and you will lower your character; sin against God, and you will condemn your soul. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezek. 18, 20. "God is not a man that He should lie, nor the son of man that He should repent. Hath He said, and shall He not do it? Or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" Num. 23, 19. Wasted health is not restored by regret; wasted wealth is not returned by grief; the criminal may repent, but he must pay the penalty and satisfy the law's demand. You have been an undutiful son, and your parents have sunk into an early grave broken-hearted, and you cannot alter it; the rash deed you have committed against your brother you cannot undo; the wrong against the sister you cannot right; the hasty word, the proud look, the haughty manner, the insulting gesture, the evil example — all are things of yesterday, and yesterday is now eternity, beyond the reach of the scepter of Caesar and the wand of the magician. When he found his canoe in the rapids, the Indian knew his efforts were hopeless; in despair he laid his oars in the canoe, lighted his pipe, folded his arms, went over the Niagara Falls to his death in the whirlpool. "King Theodore, who never showed mercy to others, distrusted the offers of mercy held out to him by us and died by his own hand," Lord Napier telegraphed when he relieved the missionaries of Abyssinia.

Why, then, expect the impossible and seek for-

giveness? "Get thee behind me, Satan!" For with God nothing shall be impossible. The holy God who punishes sin according to the Law is also the gracious God who forgives sin according to the Gospel.

You say this is a contradiction? Even so, but Jesus Christ is the key to solve the riddle. Were it not for the clear revelation of the wonderful Christ of God, we could not believe in a free forgiveness, in the sundering of cause and effect, and we would lapse into the fatalism of Islam or into the atheistic apathy of Buddhism.

Wonderful is the doctrine of the atonement, but clearly revealed is the fact that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, . . . and with His stripes we are healed." "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" All have sinned, yet we are justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, by His blood. However troubled by doubts and mysteries, I will kneel at Calvary, with my left hand clasp my Savior's streaming feet, and my right hand stretched out to heaven, and say: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1, 9. The cross of Christ and the Word of God is the basis on which I rest

my faith in the forgiveness of sins. When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died, I feel that in the light of this miracle all others dwindle into nothing. Christ said He came "to give His life a ransom for many." I take Him at His word and plead His work:—

By Thy helpless infant years,
By Thy life of want and tears,
By Thy days of sore distress
In the savage wilderness,
By the dread mysterious hour
Of th' insulting Tempter's power,
By Thine hour of dire despair,
By Thine agony of prayer,
By the cross, the nail, the thorn,
Piercing spear, and torturing scorn,
By the gloom that veiled the skies
O'er the dreadful sacrifice,
By Thy deep expiring groan,
By the sad sepulchral stone,
By the vault, whose dark abode
Held in vain the rising God —
Oh! from earth to heaven restored,
Mighty, reascended Lord,
Listen, listen to the cry
Of our solemn litany!

Upon a life I have not lived,
Upon a death I did not die,
Another's life, another's death,
I stake my whole eternity.

The bolt of deadly lightning God hurled at us was turned from its course and struck Christ on Calvary in our stead, and thus He took our punishment and died that we might live, and God's justice is satisfied with the Substitute. In our

own selves the New Adam, that is to say, the new life given us in the new birth, fights and overcomes the Old Adam, that is, our sinful nature and habits. The New Adam, by daily contrition and repentance, is to drown and kill off the Old Adam and prosper at his expense and keep him in subjection. The converted sinner has passed "from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God"; "old things have passed away, and all things have become new."

Jesus paid it all —

All the debt I owe,

And nothing, either great or small,

Remains for me to do.

That is justification. Hear the matchless argument: "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Rom. 8, 32. That is the triumphant conclusion of heavenly logic.

Will you say, "Mine iniquity is greater than that it may be forgiven?" Then listen to St. Paul: "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Rom. 5, 20. Just because your sin is great, there is sense and force in your and David's prayer: Be merciful unto my sin, for it is great!

Do you feel that your sins cling to you like filthy rags? You shall be clothed with the garments of salvation and covered with the robe of righteousness. Is. 61, 10.

Do you feel that you are all stained with deadly

Dallmann, The Lord's Prayer.

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sin? "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." 1 Cor. 6, 11. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Is. 1, 18.

There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

Do you fear that Satan will bring a bill of indictment against you? The handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, God has blotted out and taken out of the way and nailed to His cross. Col. 2, 14.

Do you fear the weapons and the testimony of Satan, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord." Is. 54, 17.

Do you hold back because these are mere promises? But think how many times these promises were fulfilled! Jacob took advantage of his brother Esau and deceived his father Isaac, and yet he became Israel, a prince with God; David was an adulterer and a cowardly murderer, and yet he received a clean heart and a free spirit; Peter denied Christ, and yet he was received again; Paul persecuted the Church of God, and

yet the chief of sinners became the chief of the apostles; the thief at the right hand had led a riotous life, and yet in the eleventh hour he heard the promise, "This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise"; Zacchaeus, the publican, received pardon; Mary Magdalene pressed her sinful lips to Jesus' feet and was forgiven; and since then thousands and thousands have been brought in from the highways and byways and were given the wedding-garment and seated at the table; thousands and thousands of prodigals have come from their rioting and squandering, from their husks and swine in the far country to their Father and received the welcome, the ring, and the garment, and the fatted calf, and the merrymaking.

"Are you the slave of evil tempers and raging passions? Go to Him as some demoniac. Has utter deadness crept over you? Go as the impotent paralytic. Does dissipation claim you as its wretched and shattered victim? Go as a lunatic. Is there darkness all around you? Go like the blind Bartimaeus. And if you feel all foul with inward leprosy, go always as a leper crying, as Isaiah did, 'Unclean, unclean!' Go to Christ; He is the balm in Gilead, and He the Physician there. 'Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out!'"

King James II of England allowed his rebel nephew, the Duke of Monmouth, to see him and sue for pardon and yet did not grant the pardon. "To see him and not to spare him was an outrage

on humanity and decency," says one historian, and another says: "It was very extraordinary and quite opposed to the usage of other nations." Our Father invites us, "Seek ye My face," and when we come to sue for pardon, He will grant the pardon; He is no James II. Sir J. Y. Simpson, the discoverer of the use of chloroform, was once asked, "What do you consider your greatest discovery?" The great scientist replied, "That I am a sinner, and that Christ is my Savior."

Where is this forgiveness to be found? The Bible is the bank in which Christ has deposited the forgiveness of sin; to the Bible we go and by faith draw the treasure and make it our own. The Bible is the bath into which we plunge and by faith wash all our sins away. The Bible is the place where Christ has put the garments of salvation and the robe of righteousness; to the Bible we go and by faith put on these garments and appear before the judgment-bar of God, confident we shall be acquitted. The Bible is the market where by faith, without money and without price, we buy and eat and drink the bread and the water of salvation. The Bible is the dispensary where we find a cure for every ill of our soul. The Bible is the arsenal where we find the weapons to fight the good fight of faith against all spiritual enemies. The Bible is the guide to Christ, the bridge across the gulf of sin, that separates man and God; by faith we walk this bridge and cross the gulf and come forgiven to our heavenly Father.

If God forgives my sin, how am I to look upon the sorrows resulting from my sin? A drug may be a poison or a medicine, just according to the way it is taken, and so it is with the sufferings that come in consequence of sin. If I do not accept God as my Father and believe that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, I am a rebel, and my sorrows are punishments the Lord inflicts upon a rebel. If I am God's child, these same sorrows and sufferings are not a punishment, but a discipline, a fatherly chastening, a loving correction. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." If I really repent of my dishonesty, God forgives my sin, but He does not compel others to make me a bank cashier. If men distrust me, I must bear that as a lesson in humility and watchfulness and prayer. And so with other sins. "Then shalt thou remember thy ways and be ashamed; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; that thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God." Paul rejoices in sin forgiven, but he always thinks with utter shame of the fact that he once was so blind as to persecute the Church of God. The more sincerely we mourn the sin committed, the greater will be our thankfulness for sin forgiven.

IV.

What It Requires.

When we heartily pray, "Forgive us our trespasses," it will not be hard to add, "As we forgive those who trespass against us." If we truly ask God to forgive us, we have already forgiven our enemy. To have an unforgiving disposition is a sin, and when we seek forgiveness of sin, we ask that this one be also forgiven. In the very nature of the case, then, it is quite impossible for a man to offer up a real prayer for pardon and still cherish anger toward his fellow-sinner. I cannot at the same time hate my hatred and also nurse it. When we have become Christians and have received God's forgiveness, we also put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of our mouth, and put on, as the elect of God, holy, and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave, so also do we. Col. 3, 8. 12. 13.

Forgiveness is the very essence of Bible doctrine; it is the very center of theology and morality. The forgiveness of the sins of His enemies is the very heart of the mission of Christ, the objective point of His suffering and death, and so the forgiveness of the sins of our enemies is the very heart of our practical Christianity, of our taking up our cross daily and following in the

footsteps of Christ. "If any man hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His." The only thing that lends worth and beauty to our deeds is our forgiving love, and it only reflects the forgiving love of God, as the dewdrop reflects the dazzling glory of the rising sun. Every prayer for pardon is also a promise to pardon. "In the course of justice none of us should see salvation; we do pray for mercy; and the same prayer doth teach us all to render the deeds of mercy." Works of mercy must follow prayers for mercy; otherwise they are "fair mothers, dying in childbirth of dead sons," as Tennyson puts it.

When a spark of the forgiving love of God falls from heaven into our hearts, we will not stand upon ceremony and the order of our forgiving. While we were yet sinners, God loved us and took the first step to bring about a reconciliation. Otherwise it would never have been brought about, for our proud and rebellious heart would never have thought of making peace with God. Having taken the first step, God must, in addition, use heavenly eloquence to persuade us haughty rebels to accept the olive-branch of peace, He must beseech us by the dying love of Christ to be reconciled to Him. Being, then, God's child, show that you are well-born and well-bred, and take the first step towards reconciliation with your angry brother. Do not say, as so many say, many inside as well as outside the Church: "He harmed me; it's his place to come to me and apologize; he

must first speak to me." Well and good; but if he does not! Then show your superior Christian training, show the greater amount of grace; go to him and prepare the way for peace and confidence. As Christ came to you, His enemy, so you go to your enemy with the olive-branch of peace and good will and good feeling. As God has forgiven you freely, without money and without price, simply with the desire to do good to you, so do you also to your brother; forgive him to do good to him. Many are willing to forgive him when they espy an advantage for themselves, but not otherwise. This is sordid selfishness; such a thought must never take root in your heart, otherwise your friendship will be like that of Herod and Pilate — at the expense of Christ. As your Father has forgiven you fully, each and every last one of your sins, so do you likewise to your brother; let not a single wrong remain rankling and festering in your heart to keep an open and running sore. As your Father has forgiven you sincerely, heartily, everlastingly; as He has blotted out your transgressions, buried them in the depths of the sea, put them away as far as the evening is from the morning, so do you forgive from the depth of your heart, forgive and forget, and never again cast the matter up to your brother.

The Tuscan Captain Venustianus had both hands of Bishop Sabinus chopped off. Not long after, his eyes became sore, and many thought he would become blind. Sabinus heard of it and

prayed: "O Lord, behold, I forgive my debtor all his debts! O heavenly Father, forgive me also all my debts and sins; hear my prayer and help my enemy Venustianus that he may not become blind!" God heard the prayer of Bishop Sabinus, and when Venustianus got well and heard of it, he became a Christian.

In 1461 Vienna revolted against Emperor Frederick III and trained cannons on the castle in which he, his wife, and his son were living. After the death of Duke Albert of Austria the Emperor was advised to take revenge, but he replied: "I, too, am a sinner, and daily do I pray to God to show me mercy and not justice. So will I show mercy to my subjects and not deal with them according to strict justice."

Henry the Quarrelsome not only made war on his brother, Emperor Otto I, the Great, but about Easter, 942, also sent assassins to Quedlinburg. Seeing that neither force nor intrigue was of avail, Henry went to Frankfurt at Christmas, fell down at his brother's feet, and sued for pardon. After a long, silent struggle the Emperor forgave the rebel for Christ's sake, kissed him, gave him a part of Lothringia, and in 947 all Bavaria.

To avenge the death of Conradin, Constantia, queen of Peter III of Aragon, sentenced Prince Charles of Salerno to be executed on a Friday. The prince was glad to die just on the day on which Christ had died. The queen heard of it and said: "Because the prince dies cheerfully on

this day, I will forgive him out of love to Him who died on this day for our salvation."

Finding he was poisoned by the Communion wine, Emperor Henry VII said to the Dominican monk Bernard Jacobinus: "God forgive you for this deed. Hurry away; for should my servants find you, they would kill you." The Emperor calmly waited for his death, trusting in the Lord, and said: "His will be done."

Though cruelly persecuted by Saul, David nevertheless spared Saul's life and did good to Saul's son Mephibosheth.

Stephen prayed for those who stoned him to death, and Christ on the cross prayed for His enemies: "Father, forgive them!"

"Let no one hurt him!" were the first words of President McKinley when shot at Buffalo.

Every prayer implies a pledge. Yet this petition is of such vast importance that Christ particularly expresses the pledge: "As we forgive those who trespass against us." Furthermore, at the end of the prayer our Savior turns back to this point and stops to remark: "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Matt. 6, 14. 15. And our forgiveness must be prompt and not halting. "When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any, that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses." Mark 11, 25. Of course,

our forgiveness is not the cause of God's forgiveness — "As well might a company of rebels plead that as they had forgiven each other their petty wrongs in prison, they might all claim exemption from the penalties of high treason."

The importance of our forgiveness is also shown in the parable of the Unmerciful Servant. Matt. 18, 23—35. From this we learn that, if we do not forgive as we have been forgiven, God will take back from us the forgiveness He had already granted, and will cast us into prison until we have paid the uttermost farthing. Even the heathen say, "The gods avenge on stony hearts a fruitless prayer for pity." And St. James says: "He shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy." Jas. 2, 13.

Unforgiving — unforgiven. The founder of Georgia said, "I never forgive any one." John Wesley rejoined, "Sir, I trust you never sin." When the Countess of Nottingham confessed having kept back the ring by which Essex pleaded for forgiveness, Queen Elizabeth said, "God may forgive you, but I cannot."

The following story shows how God sometimes treats the unforgiving.

Sapricius, a Christian preacher, and Nicephorus, a layman, both of Antioch, were fast friends for a long time. After a quarrel their love turned to hate; they did not even speak to each other, which gave much offense in the Church. At last Nicephorus repented and sent several of

their common friends to Sapricius to ask forgiveness, but in vain. Nicephorus threw himself at the feet of Sapricius and begged, "Forgive me, my Father, for the Lord's sake." But the preacher was unmoved. Not long after, Emperor Valerianus persecuted the Christians, and Sapricius was arrested, brought before the governor, and ordered to sacrifice to the idols. He refused and was condemned to be beheaded. On the way to execution Nicephorus again fell at the feet of Sapricius and cried, "Martyr of Christ, forgive me for having offended you." In haughty silence Sapricius went on. Again and again Nicephorus sued for forgiveness; again and again Sapricius refused. Having arrived at the place of execution, Nicephorus again begged to be forgiven and added: "It is written, Ask, and it shall be given you." But even this word of the Lord made no impression, and now the Holy Spirit withdrew His hand altogether from Sapricius. "Kneel down to be beheaded," the executioner said. "What for?" inquired Sapricius. "Because you would not sacrifice to the gods, and because you disobeyed the emperor's command for the sake of a man by the name of Christ." Tremblingly Sapricius begged: "Do not strike: I will obey the emperor and sacrifice to the gods." And now Nicephorus exhorted him: "Do not sin, my brother; deny not Christ, our Lord! Oh, I beseech you, do not lose the crown you have already won." But Sapricius heeded this exhortation as little as the prayer for

forgiveness, and so through his unforgiving spirit he became a miserable idolater. Nicephorus now said: "I am a Christian; I believe on the name of our Lord whom he has denied," and upon this he received the crown of martyrdom.

No wonder Paul pleads with us to follow Christ's example, "forgiving one another if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." Col. 3, 13. There is no reconciliation with God without a previous reconciliation with man. To obey is better than sacrifice. Unless we forgive our neighbor, our worship of God is rank hypocrisy. "If thou bring thy gift to the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother and then come and offer thy gift." Matt. 5, 23. 24. Nothing, absolutely nothing, will be of any avail unless I out of love forgive my neighbor's wrong. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." 1 Cor. 13, 1—3. Nothing is good unless the demon of unforgiveness is cast out. Un-

less the devils of hatred have been exorcised, our petitions will be positively harmful to us. As Franklin sent up his kite and drew down lightning, so will we send up this petition and draw down the lightning of God's curse on our heart if we have not first forgiven our neighbor his faults.

Bishop John, of Alexandria, in the sixth century, tried to preserve peace in his congregation. When at one time a prominent member would not be reconciled with his enemy, the pastor took him into church, and there they prayed the Lord's Prayer together. When they had come to "as we forgive those who trespass against us," the bishop stopped and the other prayed these words alone: "Consider now," interrupted the bishop, "what a terrible thing you have just said. Does not the Lord say, 'If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses?'" These words entered the heart of the man; with streaming eyes he made up with his enemy.

"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us"; do to us as we do unto others. Very well; here is a man unable to pay you his debts; you go to law and take everything away from him and put him and his into the direst need, just to get a few dollars, and then you pray: "Father, forgive me as I forgave him!"

Another one has defrauded you, and you go to law to get revenge, and then you pray: "Father, forgive me as I forgave him!"

Another one has cracked a cruel joke at your expense; you seem not to notice it; you treat him politely on the street; yet your heart is inflamed in secret hate against him; and then you pray: "Father, forgive me as I forgave him!"

Plato was asked by the tyrant Dionysius not to abuse him at Athens for his crimes, and the philosopher haughtily replied "he had other things to do than to think of Dionysius." Do we not also often forgive in the same disdainful spirit and then in our devotions ask our Father to forgive us as we have forgiven our neighbor?

How often do we testily ask, "Forgive you again? How often must I forgive you? Yes; but this is the last time." We forget that we must forgive not only seven times, but seventy times seven, and yet we daily go to our Father and pray: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

Is not our character drawn in the following lines:—

Forgiveness was his theme; and, lo!
What words with eloquence aglow!
And yet, upon his homeward way,
He met relentlessly that day
An ancient enemy who plead
Forgiveness for an ill long dead:
And with quick words, with wrath
aglow,
He silenced his repentant foe.

Some one has grievously wronged you and especially your family, and he sues for forgiveness with all signs of sincere sorrow; but still smart-

ing under the pain, you passionately cry out, "I will forgive, but I cannot forget!" And then you go to your Father and pray: "Do unto me as I did unto him!"

You say unto him, "God may forgive you; I cannot and I will not," and then in your devotions you pray, "Father, forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us!"

Think of these things, and you will surely, with Augustine, call this the "terrible petition."

Come, let us not lie in ambush and fire at long range; let us meet the enemy with clubbed muskets. Saul was to destroy utterly the Amalekites and all their possessions, but the people kept back the chief things for a sacrifice unto God, and God, by the mouth of Samuel, said to Saul: "To obey is better than sacrifice." 1 Sam. 15, 22. Have you not likewise been very careful as to rites and ceremonies and sacraments and other outward actions and yet not been obedient in your heart to God's commandments? How often have you worshiped God in church and yet had a grudge in your heart against your neighbor in the other pew! "To obey is better than sacrifice." "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?" Micah 6, 8. "For I desired mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." Hos. 6, 6.

The scribes and Pharisees were so scrupulous about the minute observance of the smallest par-

ticalars of their religious duties: they were to give a tenth of their income; and they were so conscientious that they gave the tenth part of even such trifles as mint and anise and cumin. All very good; but while so precise about such trifles, they neglected the weightier matters of the Law, judgment and mercy and faith. They strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel, said Christ, and He calls them hypocrites and cries woe upon them. He says they are like whited sepulchres, which, indeed, appear beautiful outward, but are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness within; "even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." Come, let us face this terrible arraignment of Christ and see if we can do it with unflinching eye and unblanched cheek and unquivering lip.

With the most powerful argument at His command — as we hope to be forgiven — Christ would lead us to forgive our neighbor. If so, how much more does this petition plead against our doing injustice in any manner to our neighbor!

Many of us often feel like the poet —

'Tis a point I long to know,
Do I love the Lord or no?

It does not require a long process of close reasoning or deep reading in bulky tomes of theology to find the answer to this important question. Our own heart is a fair test: as our heart is disposed to our enemy, so is God's heart

disposed toward us, and so is ours disposed toward Him. Our heart is the best thermometer to tell the degrees of our spiritual fervor; it is the best barometer to tell the spiritual atmosphere we are living in; it is the best index to the state of our soul in relation to God; the best balance to find whether we be found wanting. "If a man say, 'I love God,' and hate his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" 1 John 4, 20. And our Savior says what we have done to the least of His brethren, we have done unto Him. Matt. 25, 40. "With the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." Luke 6, 38. Chrysostom says: "God makes thee arbiter of the Judgment: as thou judgest thyself, He will judge thee." "As we forgive those who trespass against us," — Luther says this addition is made in order that we may have a sign by which to decide whether we are true children of God; and then, whether our sins are forgiven. "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." 1 John 3, 14.

This petition furthermore tends to develop a forgiving disposition in us, and that is of the utmost practical importance to our own well-being. A hard, cruel, unforgiving disposition sours the milk of human kindness, dries up the vital forces, makes us sullen, morose, gloomy, makes us miserable and makes miserable those about us. Though

the eldest son, Tennyson's father did not inherit the family estate. He felt this as an unjust treatment, and it soured him, spoiled his happiness and also the happiness of his whole family. "My poor father was all his life a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief," Lord Tennyson wrote.

On the other hand, a sunny, cheerful, genial, forgiving disposition brings joy and gladness into your own heart and helps to smooth the rough road of life like a pneumatic tire; it helps to sugar-coat the bitter pills we must swallow. And it helps to bring sunshine into our family and friends. A sun-dial had this motto, *Horas nisi serenas non numero*; "I count only the cloudless hours." Make that your motto. Cheer up and look at the bright side of things. Enjoy the rose; don't grumble about the thorn.

If all men would live in the spirit of this petition, the world would again burst forth with the blossoms of righteousness and become a vestibule of Paradise; for lack of doing so men have filled the world with unrighteousness and misery, have wrung groans out of many bosoms to fill the air with their sorrowful sounds.

"Forgive us our trespasses" — this is a confession of our misery and a prayer of humility. If we pray this aright, all the pride of the Pharisee will be cast from our heart, and we shall be pleasing to God as was the publican.

"Forgive us our trespasses" — this is a proof of trust in God's mercy, a prayer of faith. If we

pray this aright, all despair of Cain and Judas will take wing, and we shall shed penitential tears as did David and Peter and rise from our fall.

"Forgive us our trespasses" — shows our lively interest in the weal and woe of our sinful brethren; a prayer of charity. If we pray this aright, we cannot be like the heartless servant in the parable, Matt. 18, but will "heartily forgive and readily do good to those who sin against us."

Alas! alas!

Why, all the souls that were, were forfeit once,
And He that might the vantage best have took
Found out the remedy. How would you be
If He, which is the top of judgment, should
But judge you as you are? Oh! think on that;
And mercy then will breathe within your lips
Like man new made.

Our Father's Temptation.

Into temptation lead us not;
And when the Foe doth war and plot
Against our souls on every hand,
Then, armed with faith, O may we stand
Against him as a valiant host,
Through comfort of the Holy Ghost.

Luther.

Freed from the slavery of Egypt, Israel faced the dangers of the desert. "Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee," said Christ. John 5, 14. "After God has forgiven us, there is nothing we have so earnestly to pray for as that we fall not again into the same filth," says Luther. Having in the Fifth Petition seen our great sinfulness, and that God alone can forgive us, we now, in the Sixth Petition, look into the future full of distrust of our own strength and with an earnest appeal for God's help in our coming conflicts. "Thou hast delivered my soul from death; wilt not Thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?" Ps. 56, 13.

OUR FATHER'S TEMPTATION.

I.

What Is It?

The word "temptation" here really means a proving, a trial, a test, made to discover whether a thing ought to be accepted or rejected. In this

light everything, everywhere, at all times is a "temptation." Everything is a sentinel demanding the password or asking us to pronounce the shibboleth; everything weighs us in the balance and puts us on our mettle and forces us to show our colors. In everything we do or not do we fall into rank and file either for God or against God. "He that is not with Me is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth." Luke 11, 23.

A switch on a railroad track moves only a few inches, but if turned the wrong way, it sends the train crashing into another, causing wreck and death. So all things in this world try a man; and the turning of a hair's breadth directs the temptation into approbation or reprobation. We are, for instance, to eat and to drink; that is the *use*; that is to be to the glory of God. But eating and drinking too much is the *abuse*; that is gluttony and drunkenness; that is unto damnation. The same is true of working, and resting, and marrying, and everything else. Everything we see and hear in politics, in business, in society, in church, in the home puts us on trial, and we must take sides for or against the right. Prosperity and adversity, weal and woe, bane and blessing, feasting and fasting, — all come to inspect us, to challenge us to combat, to make us their masters or their slaves.

And no one is excused, all must be tested. Even Christ Himself was led up into the wilderness to

be tempted of the devil, and our whole life long we are being led up to be tempted. Every station, rank, and occupation has its own peculiar snares and pitfalls. The rich have their temptations; the man with one talent buried his. The merchant has his temptation, and so has the politician, and the lawyer, and the physician, and the scholar, and the — yes — and the clergyman — “the heart knoweth his own bitterness.” Prov. 14, 10. As men we are tempted; as Christians we feel it the more keenly. “Lead us not into temptation” — all need the Father’s help.

Temptation is necessary. As the body is exercised and strengthened by athletics, as the mind is trained and developed at college, so is the soul disciplined and strengthened by temptation. Temptation is a course of training prescribed by God for the development of spiritual athletes. A new ship may be the best ever launched, and yet no one would think of shipping in her before she had stood the test of her trial trip and been pronounced seaworthy. The most valuable soldiers are the scarred veterans of the old guard that will die, but never surrender. A storm rids the tree of dead branches, and by shaking it loosens the ground that it may strike the roots still deeper and firmer; so temptations are to serve the Christian — “Firmer he roots him, the ruder the blow.”

Now, then, if trials come to you, be not surprised and be not aggrieved. “Beloved, think it

not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." 1 Pet. 4, 12. 13. James bids you: "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations, knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." Jas. 1, 2. 3. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life."

God's purpose is to sanctify us through sorrow, and the experience of God's children is that sorrow is good. "Happy is the man whom God correcteth. Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest. Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I kept Thy Word." Paul could "rejoice in tribulations."

God does not send us trials and temptations for His information, but that we might learn what is in us. "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord, thy God, led thee . . . to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart." Deut. 8, 2. If we learn our strength, it shall cause gratitude to God and give us courage for future battles. If we learn our weakness, it shall teach us to look to the hills from which cometh our help — "Our help cometh from the Lord." Ps. 121, 1. 2. "I will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on My name, and

I will hear them. I will say, It is My people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." Zech. 13, 9.

God tries us also on our neighbor's account. As we in our trials take courage from the victorious struggles of God's afflicted saints, so are we to leave behind us "footprints on the sands of time";

Footprints that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Christ "was made like unto His brethren"; "He was in all points tempted like as we are"; He was made "perfect through suffering"; "in that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted." Heb. 2, 10, 18. Christians are to be duplicates of Christ and by their trials to become sympathetic helpers of others in their trials.

As a lofty mountain with a sun-bathed peak looms up before our eyes on the page of Holy Writ Abraham's trial of faith. "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Gen. 22, 2. And without a trace of feeling the historian calmly goes on: "And Abraham stretched forth his hand and took the knife to slay his son." "And the Angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, 'Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou

anything unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from Me.'” That was a supreme test of faith, but Abraham stood it, and to an admiring world throughout all ages shall he be known by the glorious title “The Father of the Faithful.”

Down, deep down, in the valley of affliction, stripped of all his ample wealth, bereft of all of his sons and daughters, full of boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown, taking a potsherd to scrape himself withal, sitting among the ashes is the patriarch of Uz. Surely he was sorely tempted, yet what do we read? “In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.” And from this lowly pulpit, how eloquently does he preach patience! Blessed Job! blessed in tribulations! Millions of sore hearts have learned from thee to say: “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” “What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?” Job 1, 21; 2, 10.

Paul was another of God's well-beloved sons, whose faith and patience were tested to the point of snapping. Lest Paul should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of the revelations, there was given unto him a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet him. For this thing Paul besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from him. But God said unto him: “My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength

is made perfect in weakness." 2 Cor. 12, 7—9. Who would not gladly bear the same if he could hear the same: "My grace is sufficient for thee"? The assurance of God's grace—who would not undergo trials for it? "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." Jas. 1, 12.

The rich man in Luke 16, 19—21 was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day and heeded not the great needs of poor Lazarus at his door. Thereby God tried his charity, and we see it did not stand the trial. The priest and the Levite passed by the man who had fallen among thieves, Luke 10, 30—35; their charity was called on, but did not answer to the cry for help. The Samaritan was tried by the same test, and he did not fail; he showed charity, and Christ enshrined his memory for all ages.

Likewise does God try our thankfulness. Jacob carried his life in his hands when leaving home; he returned a wealthy man. His head was not turned by his success; his heart was turned to God, and he gave thanks to God. Gen. 32, 9. 10. After the wonderful draught of fish, Peter kneeled before His Master and showed his thankfulness. Luke 5, 4—8. Though Christ cured ten lepers, only one, a Samaritan, came to return thanks, and Christ sadly asked, "Where are the nine?"

The temptations that God sends are not unto sin—"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am

tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man." Jas. 1, 13. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live." Ezek. 33, 11. Our Father's temptation is a probation which is to result in approbation, not in reprobation. God would sift us to rid us of our chaff; Satan would sift us to rid us of our wheat. By temptation God would exercise and strengthen our Christianity, Satan would sap our powers of resistance by endless incitement. The temptations that God sends as trials of fidelity, faith, patience, etc., the devil, the world, and the flesh try to turn into inducements, allurements, incitements to sin.

II.

How It Is Endured.

If everything in this world is a temptation, a trial by which God would strengthen us, and by which Satan would weaken us, what is the meaning of asking God not to lead us into temptation? Luther answers in the Small Catechism:

"God indeed tempts no one; but we pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us, so that the devil, the world, and our flesh may not deceive us, nor seduce us into misbelief, despair, and other great shame and vice; and though we be assailed by them, that still we may finally overcome and obtain the victory."

The devil sinneth from the beginning and tempts man to sin and hence is called the Tempter. Matt. 4, 3; 1 Thess. 3, 5. Sometimes this Tempter comes as an angel of light, but the poison of asps is under his lip. He comes as the friend of man, as he came to Eve. First he tries to cloud our mind with doubt: "Yea, hath God said?" In the next place he contradicts: "Ye shall not surely die." Finally he seduces us to break through all God's Law and to rush to our ruin by dangling before our dazzled eyes the gaudy bauble: "Ye shall be as gods." Satan comes stealthily and insinuates himself ere we are aware of it. He stealthily put it into David's heart to count the people, 1 Chron. 21, 1; he deceitfully put it into Judas's heart to betray Christ, John 13, 2; he lies in ambush and shoots fiery darts, Eph. 6, 16; he sows tares among the wheat at night time, Matt. 13, 25; he is a lying spirit in the mouth of God's prophets, 1 Kings 22, 22.

Sometimes Satan comes as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. He strikes terror into our souls, and trembling seizes our every limb. In dire despair Judas goes out and hangs himself.

"The castled crag of Drachenfels" on the Rhine has a big cave, the haunt of a terrible dragon, to whom the pagans fed many Christians. One day, so the story goes, it was about to devour a Christian maiden, but she drew from her breast a cross. As if struck by a thunderbolt, the horrid monster

fell back, plunged into the Rhine, and was seen no more. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Jas. 4, 7. The cross is the only weapon.

The devil's faithful and able assistant in luring men to perdition is the world — "procuress of the lords of hell." This lustful and faithless Delilah is able with her wiles to enmesh even a thoughtless Samson and then basely betray him to the Philistines. "The whole world lieth in wickedness." 1 John 5, 19. "Therefore love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." 1 John 2, 15—17.

The lust of the flesh. — Four times Balaam tried to curse Israel, four times he failed. Then he devised a scheme, brilliant in the lurid light of hell, to bring them to ruin: the Midianitish women were to seduce the men of Israel to fornication and thereby call down on them the wrath of Jehovah and thus destroy the hated foe. A stroke of baleful genius! What deep knowledge of human nature does it reveal! Sure enough, Israel fell into the snare, and there perished in the plague twenty and four thousand. Num. 25, 9. The same trap every day, the same results every day. Dissipation, disease, death, damnation — these are the

four acts of the continuous vaudeville that begins in peals of tipsy laughter and ends in appeals for a drop of water. The foolish fish often sees the fisherman on the bank, the rod, the line, the hook, and yet it cannot resist the tempting worm; thus is it with gluttony, drunkenness, and all sensual pleasures, the lust of the flesh.

The lust of the eyes — that is another means whereby the world tempts the children of men. If the lust of the flesh is not able, or rather, no longer able, to hold the slave, the lust of the eyes is the silk-finished, cruel cord to hold the man. The lust of the eyes — glittering gold is to feed the famished eye, and the famine grows as it is fed. Gold and its braggart vaunt and its flaunting display, that is the idol worshiped by the masses. "In this sign thou shalt conquer," is written on this rainbow, and they chase it till they stumble into the morass of misery. "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." 1 Tim. 6, 9. 10.

The pride of life — that is the third gilded chain wherewith the world leads captive her victims. After the lust of the flesh begins to pall on the appetite and the lust of the eyes is partially satisfied, ambition's fire is usually kindled in the

breast and soon becomes all-consuming. The self-made man worships his maker and demands that others also burn incense to him. Honor, glory, and praise is the food he feeds on. Self is the center of all his thoughts and actions. He would step on the neck of a king to vault into his saddle. He would wreck a universe to make himself a footstool. His own pleasure, his own profit, his own praise — that is the cord of man's servitude to the world.

This temptation of the world is a serious matter. She has two great arguments: pleasure and pain; the one to draw, the other to drive. Potiphar's wife tried to draw Joseph with "youthful lusts"; failing, she drove him into prison. So does the world as a coquette woo us with seductive blandishments; if we are firm, her smiles turn to frowns, and her proffered favors become venomous persecutions, relentless to the end. "As soon as a man enters the world, an inviting Jael goes before, a deceitful Laban follows; at his right is a flattering Joab with a sword under his cloak, and at his left a kiss is offered by Judas." The traveler in the desert sees a beautiful vision of green grass, shady trees, and sparkling fountains; he leaves his path to follow the charming scene; it fades away, and the poor dupe dies of thirst and fatigue. Such is the mirage. The Arabs say it is the masterpiece of the Evil Spirit, who revels in the ruin of man. Such a mirage is the "world." The flaming beauty of the crimson blossoms of

the *Judas-tree* draws the bees. But it is poison, and the ground beneath is thick with its victims. The "world" is such a *Judas-tree*.

In 1721 John Jacob von Moser was received at Vienna by Emperor Charles VI. Prelate von Gottwein offered him office and honors if he would turn Catholic. Moser's courageous and shrewd reply was: "The bargain looks suspicious; he offers so much to boot for my Luther. Had he asked me to trade even up, I could have considered the matter. But now that he offers such a great premium in exchange for my religion, his goods must be inferior to mine." Rudolf Stadler, a Swiss, went with the celebrated traveler Tavernier, Baron de Aubonne, and came to Ispahan, where he became a favorite of the Shah, being an expert watchmaker. Wealth and honors came to him. The Vizier Mirza-Take became jealous and got the Shah to compel Stadler to turn Moham-medan. Stadler refused and was cast into prison. He was offered \$100,000. He refused. He was to be executed. To avert a riot, he was taken back into prison. He was offered \$200,000. He still refused. Again led out to be executed, he kneeled, prayed, and said: "Strike without fear; I forgive you in the name of Jesus." Down came the sword, the head rolled away, and Stadler died October, 1637, aged twenty-eight years.

Our own flesh and blood, alas! is our strongest and most persistent enemy. The imagination of man's heart being evil from his youth, God's Law

is a galling yoke upon our shoulders. We are restive under it, and it needs but a very ordinary agitator to arouse us into a frenzy of rebellion. Being inclined to evil, the eloquence of even a stuttering tongue can easily convince and persuade us. We do not want to trust in God and depend upon His strength from heaven; we want to be gods and rely upon ourselves; and so Satan has an easy task turning us away from the Lord. The traitor within our heart opens the gates and surrenders the stronghold; the white flag is run up before the enemy has made an assault. Were it not that the tiger lies crouching, he could not so readily jump at every suggestion of evil. We are often on tiptoe of expectation for the devil's and the world's invitation; we sometimes ask to be asked. If we know ourselves, we know these things are true, and that St. James speaks truly when he says chap. 1, 14: "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed." These are the "fleshly lusts which war against the soul," spoken of in 1 Pet. 2, 11. No wonder St. Paul cries out: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7, 24. No wonder the poet prays: —

God, harden me against myself,
This traitor with pathetic voice
Which craves for ease and rest and joys;
Myself arch-traitor to myself,
My hollowest friend and deadliest foe,
My clog whatever road I go.

In view of the foregoing, Luther says truly: "We cannot help being exposed to assaults, but we pray that we may not fall and perish under them." Bengel says: "We do not pray that there may not be a temptation, but that it may not conquer us." What we ask for is the Lord's help when we come into temptation; for "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation." We ask that the temptation may not be too severe for our strength or too long for our endurance, according to the comforting passage: "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation make also a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it." 1 Cor. 10, 13.

Knowing the full force of the temptation of the devil, the world, and our flesh, Paul says: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day and, having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, where-

with ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the Wicked. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." Eph. 6, 10—17.

If we shall do thus, shall we then be free from all temptation? By no means! That is not at all the point. We need "temptation"; what we do not want is to perish in the same. If we had no temptations, no trials, no obstacles, no enemies, we could never feel our cheeks tingle with joyousness of having endured hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 2 Tim. 2, 3. We could never cry with exultation: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." 2 Tim. 4, 7. 8. A miner cannot expect to be excused from going down into the shaft; a laborer cannot turn away from the heat and burden of the day; a sailor cannot ask his captain not to sail upon the high seas; a soldier cannot ask his general, "Lead me not into battle": and so a Christian cannot expect to be free of all temptations.

We have seen that a trial of our faith is good. Now, what we ask is that God would not let us be engulfed in temptations. When surrounded by overwhelming numbers, or when attacked for too long a time, even a doughty champion must succumb if not rescued in time; and for such rescue, when in need of it, we ask in this petition, *viz.*, "to withstand in the evil day and, having

done all, to stand," Eph. 6, 13; and that the Lord be faithful and establish us and keep us from evil, 2 Thess. 3, 3. As we read: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations." 2 Pet. 2, 9. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." 1 Cor. 10, 13. In such trials and conflicts we always need a new supply of faith, "the victory that overcometh the world." "Who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" 1 John 5, 4, 5. It is not that we are averse to fight, but we ask for arms and strength to fight. It is not that we refuse to bear the cross, but we ask for strength to bear it. It is not that we do not want the evil day, but we ask that as our days are, so shall our strength be. It is not that we refuse the thorn in the flesh, but we want the assurance that God's grace is sufficient for us. It is not that we refuse to drink the cup, but we ask for the angel from heaven to strengthen us. It is not that we refuse to go into the dark valley of the shadow of death, but we want God's rod and staff to comfort us. "Prayer, meditation, and temptation are the making of the theologian," says Augustine. His experience, his trials, will teach the theologian many things that prayer and meditation alone can never fully teach him. And that holds true, in a measure, of all Christians. In difficulties, when sorely straitened, no help in

sight, then it is that the soul casts her anchor deep in the Rock of Ages cleft for us and finds a firm hold in the midst of the surging billows of life's tempestuous sea and learns living truths it could not learn in any other wise. Having weathered the stress and storm, the soul then looks with grateful eye to the hills whence came her strength. "Count it all joy," then, my brethren, "when ye fall into divers temptations"; for true is the apostolic beatitude: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." Jas. 1, 2. 12.

Let us, then, arm ourselves with the prayer, "Lead us not into temptation," and then go whithersoever God may lead us, strengthened with the promise: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. . . . To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with My Father in His throne." Rev. 3, 5. 21.

We'll bless Thee for the battle,
We'll glory in the strife;
We'll shout at call of trumpet,
We'll win eternal life:
Strong in the strength of Jesus
And in His spirit brave,
Crowned through eternal ages,
We'll sing His power to save.

III.

What Does It Require?

Every prayer is also a confession; and the petition, "Lead us not into temptation," is a confession of weakness, of a feeling of danger, of mistrust in our own powers.

The virtue of most people is at best simple innocence, ignorance of the power of temptation: they have not fallen because they have not been tempted. Experience teaches us the utter frailty of human nature, and Christ, knowing what is in man, teaches us this petition for a purpose. Why, even Paul thrice besought the Lord to take away the thorn out of his flesh, thinking he could not endure the temptation. Yes, and even Christ, in the unspeakably intense agony of His soul in Gethsemane, prayed, "O My Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from Me." If such be the example of Paul and of our Savior, oh, how humbly and earnestly ought we to pray, looking at our frail, fallen human nature, "Lead us not into temptation!"

In view of the sincere confession of our weakness implied in the words, "Lead us not into temptation," this prayer also contains a solemn pledge not of our own accord to bring on the temptation. If a man will pray God to keep him safe and then try to go over Niagara Falls and swim the Whirlpool Rapids, he does not show trust in God, but the veriest presumption; his words

are not a prayer at all, but a hollow mockery or the sheerest fanaticism or wildest madness. If we really pray, "Lead us not into temptation," we promise not to go in the way of temptation. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Abraham was the father of the faithful, yet he mistrusted God at Pharaoh's court. Moses was very meek, yet he spake unadvisedly with his lips. Peter was very bold, yet he thrice denied the Lord.

Then, again, we are to beware of little sins. As we are not to despise the day of small things, so are we not to overlook the little sins. It is the little foxes that spoil the vines. Song of Sol. 2, 15. It is

the little rift within the lute
That by and by will make the music mute.

A tiny speck of dust in the eye will interfere very much with seeing right, and a little sin persisted in will dull and deaden the soul.

If I would not perish in temptation, I must shun temptation. "Enter not into the path of the wicked and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." Prov. 4, 14, 15. Obscene books and indecent pictures fire the imagination and drop poison into the soul. Thousands have been ruined by them; I will not look at them. A godless husband has led many a wife into sin and dragged her down into hell with himself. If I cannot marry the right kind of a man, I will not marry; it is better

to be a single Christian than a married sinner. Moses forsook the pleasures of the court of Egypt and threw in his lot with the despised, down-trodden, and enslaved Israelites; I will throw in my lot with the humblest Christians rather than cultivate the society of the male and female sinners of the "smart set."

If children are to grow up true followers of Jesus Christ, they must not be taught the fashionable follies of what is called "society." Lot in his day pitched his tent toward Sodom, and his daughters married Sodomites — of course. How often is this repeated! When Sodom was destroyed, Lot and his daughters barely saved their lives. This is not often repeated! Had Peter shivered in the cold rather than warmed himself at the fire of the soldiers, he would not have been tempted to curse and deny Christ. The Savior says: "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." Matt. 26, 41. Going into temptation is like running down hill; you cannot stop when you will. David loitered on the roof and fastened his eyes on bathing Bathsheba; in consequence of this he became an adulterer and a murderer. How many men have made a similar experiment with the same dismal result! "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity." Ps. 119, 37. Dinah, the daughter of Leah, went out to see the daughters of the land; in consequence of this she was ruined by Shechem. Gen. 34, 1. 2. How many girls go out to "see life," to have "a good time" and in

consequence are ruined for life! "Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee." Prov. 4, 25.

An hour or more, not meaning any harm?
It is hypocrisy against the devil;
They that mean virtuously and yet do so,
The devil their virtue tempts, and they tempt
Heaven.

We must look upon a sinful suggestion
as a serpent's egg,
which, hatched, would, as his kind, grow mischievous,
and kill him in the shell.

In order to keep the river clean, we must keep the source clean. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Prov. 4, 23. Says Cowper:—

When fierce temptation, seconded within
By traitor Appetite and armed with darts
Tempered in hell, invades the throbbing breast,
To combat may be glorious, and success
Perhaps may crown us; but to fly is safe.

The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; therefore "he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." Prov. 28, 26. When fronted by temptation, we must shoot our arrows and turn like the Parthians to full flight and thus obtain the victory. With their beautiful songs the Sirens lured the sailors to shore and then killed them. When Ulysses came near their island, he lashed himself to the mast that, when tempted to rush into ruin, he could not even if he would. So must we put ourselves into such a position that

we cannot fall even if we would. If our eye would tempt us to sin, let us pluck it out; for it is better to go to heaven with one eye than to hell with two. If your business is keeping you away from God, get out of the business, even though you lose heavily; for it is better to go to heaven poor as Lazarus than to go to hell rich as Dives.

In the thick of the shot and shell at Waterloo, Wellington said to a Brussels merchant: "You have no business here, but I am performing my duty." When God leads us, like Christ, into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, we must go, and God will with the temptation also make a way of escape out of temptation; but we are not to rush into temptation of our own accord. We must not go where we have no command and no promise of God as stepping-stones.

While I thus confess my weakness and pledge myself to do nothing that may lead me into sin, I am also conscious of my brother's weakness, and I pledge myself to do nothing that may be an evil example to him and lead him astray. "If meat maketh my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh forevermore, that I make not my brother to stumble." "It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth or is offended, or is made weak." There are many things which may be rightly used, but which are almost always abused. In view of the evil tendency of these things, the abuse will for me forbid the use. A Christian can never wil-

lingly be a devil to tempt his brother to sin, but a Christian will also give utmost heed that he will not do so unwillingly. I am my brother's keeper, and I must have regard not to my strength, but to his weakness, just as Jacob, journeying homeward, led on softly, as the children were able to endure, because the children were tender and the flocks and herds were with young. Gen. 33, 13, 14. In theory a game of cards is as innocent as a game of chess and checkers, and yet in practise cards often lead on to gambling; on account of this evil tendency I shall not play cards that my example may not lead astray the young or the weak. I can fancy moral people presenting a clean play at a respectable theater, and I might witness the production without any moral harm to myself. And yet the whole tendency of the theater at large is toward evil, and I shall not by my example encourage others who cannot discriminate. I know that a square dance at a social gathering in the home of respectable people is as innocent as most other amusements, but the ball has been the ruin of thousands, and therefore I shall not dance at all that others may not be encouraged by my example. A glass of wine may be more wholesome than a cup of coffee, but that is no excuse for frequenting saloons and lending my influence in their favor. Howell Harris and his boon companions made his pet goat drunk and amused themselves with its caperings; after it had sobered, it would never again drink a drop of whisky. He

felt rebuked by his goat; he gave up drinking and became one of the greatest preachers of Wales. How often do foolish friends try to make others drunk "for fun"! It is the gentle Jesus who uses these fierce words: "Whoso shall offend [tempt to wrong] one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." William Arnot, when going to school, had to cross the ford on the river Earn. When the current was strong, the children used to take each other's hands, and so they passed safely through. That is just what we do when we pray, "Lead *us* not into temptation."

Knowing my own weakness, I also know my brother's weakness, and so my supplication becomes an intercession when I pray, "Lead *us* not into temptation," as a man aboard ship cannot pray for his own safety without praying for the safety of all others, crew and passengers, cabin passengers and steerage passengers. We are to embrace our brother with arms of prayer and bring him to the Throne of Grace that God may stretch out over him the arms of omnipotence in his defense as well as in ours. While praying for his own children, a father is also to pray for the children of other fathers; the employer is to pray for the employed; the employed for the employer; the ruler for the governed; the governed for those in authority; the pastor for the people; and the hearers for the preacher.

We know our past sins, and we have fled to prayer as to a hospital to have our wounds dressed when we prayed, "Forgive us our trespasses"; we know our present weakness, and we go to prayer as to an arsenal to get arms for defense. Knowing our past sins and also our present weakness, we cannot possibly despise our brother who has fallen under the assault of temptation. We are comrades in a common cause, and we fight side by side. If another is wounded in the fight and falls, we are not to stride on with haughty mien over his prostrate form, but we are to help carry him on a stretcher to the rear that he may have his wounds dressed, that he may recover and rejoin his regiment and help fight in another battle. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye, which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the Law of Christ. . . . And let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Gal. 6, 1. 2. 9. 10.

Pity the fallen — O the bitter strife,
The shame, the fear, the anguish of their life!
Assist the fallen — thou may'st need a hand,
For thou may'st fall, who firmly now dost stand.
Seek out the fallen — love them, succor lend,
And thus resemble Christ, the sinner's Friend.

Restore the fallen — thou hast been reclaimed,
For Jesus sought thee, raised thee, cheered,
though blamed.

O save the fallen — bliss indeed 'twill be,
With souls thus won, to spend eternity.

This petition is also a great consolation; sincere prayer against temptation is strong evidence of hatred of sin. In this prayer, then, we have a proof that we are not sold under sin and the slaves of it, but that we are born again and the children of God. We can say with the psalmist: "I hate vain thoughts." Vain thoughts argue my sinfulness, but the hatred of them proves my sonship of God.

As God's child I rely upon Him for help and rest secure: "When I am weak, then am I strong." 2 Cor. 12, 10. We shall not be overcome by the weakness that drives us to lean upon the Almighty. "To a certain younger brother who desired to be free from his evil imaginations one of the elders replied: 'Thou canst not prevent the birds from flying over thy head, but yet thou canst prevent them from building their nests in thy hair.' And again the blessed Augustine saith: 'We cannot avoid temptations, but we can, by calling upon God for aid, take heed that they do not overcome us,' " says Luther.

Our Father's Deliverance.

From evil, Lord, deliver us!
The times and days are perilous;
Redeem us from eternal death;
And when we yield our dying breath,
Console us, grant us calm release,
And take our souls to Thee in peace.

Luther.

The world we live in is beautiful and affords many pleasures to men. In winter snow clothes the earth in a mantle of ermine; frost touches the waters, and they stand still to listen to the merry sound of the skaters and sleigh-bells; men rear their ice palaces and boys their forts of snow, and "A Winter Scene" hangs on the walls of many people of taste and refinement. Yes, the world is beautiful in winter.

In spring the flowers and trees burst into beauty of color and fragrance, the fish gambol in the waters, and the birds wanton melodiously in the balmy air. Nature rises from a refreshing sleep and with vigor and pleasure goes about her appointed work. Yes, the world is beautiful in spring.

In summer the ripening grain waves in the golden sun, and the tasseled corn nods to the gentle breeze, and at dusk, when all the air a solemn stillness holds, the toil-worn hands do rest, and nature breathes a hymn of thanks. Yes, the world is beautiful in summer.

In the autumn, grateful for the toil bestowed

upon her, the earth is a huge cornucopia and gives to man the best she has. The glad shout of the reapers is heard, and anon the happy Day of Thanksgiving is at hand. Yes, the world is beautiful in the fall.

And yet, the world is very evil. Men may discuss the origin of evil, but no one can deny the existence of evil. Everything has a flaw in it, the Serpent's trail is over it all, the finest fruit is worm-eaten, the fairest flower harbors an insect, and from the face of the earth, up from the hearts of men, arises the prayer for our Father's deliverance.

This petition is a sponge gathering all tears and placing them into God's lap; it is a hand holding God's heart till it break in mercy over our misery; it is a preparation for our deathbed; it is a Jacob's ladder on which we learn to mount to heaven; it is a key unlocking the heavenly portal that we hear the songs of triumph of the elect.

I.

What Is the Evil from Which Man Needs Deliverance?

1. The evil of property. The earth was given to man for an inheritance, but for his sin it was cursed, thousands of thistles it brings forth to him, and in the sweat of his face he must carry on a ceaseless war for his very existence; he must try to quell the spirit of rebellion and laboriously wrest from her niggard hand what is often barely

enough for a mere existence. In an angry mood, anon the earth shakes herself, and earthquakes swallow up whole cities and destroy whole provinces; tornadoes sweep away the ships that sail the seas; cyclones rush over the breadth of the land in their rage and leave wreck and ruin in their path; fires, floods, droughts, insects, destroy crops, and hollow-eyed famine stalks through a hungering land.

2. Not content with all this evil, man has to inflict more on himself and on others. Gluttony, drunkenness, lewdness, often brings evil to the third and fourth generation. The greediness of hardened hearts causes suffering to thousands of working people. The criminal carelessness of cities invites pest and plague and pestilence, by not procuring pure water, fresh air, and general cleanliness. The envy, distrust, and rivalry of rulers bring upon whole nations the unspeakable horrors of war.

"Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn."

Look at the armies of doctors, surgeons, dentists, oculists; look at the sick-rooms, hospitals, dispensaries, asylums, infirmaries, and picture the evil of body! Look at the jails, prisons, penitentiaries, reformatories; look at the armies of police, detectives, militia, soldiers; look at the arsenals, the factories of swords, rifles, cannon, powder, dynamite; look at the monster forts on land and huge battleships on sea! Millions of men and

billions of money are year after year employed to inflict evil on men, whereas the same means, wisely directed, might do away with all the slums, alleys, and hovels throughout the wide world! No wonder the Lord taught us to pray: "Deliver us from evil!"

Were half the power that fills the world with terror,

Were half the wealth, bestowed on camps and courts,
Given to redeem the human mind from error,

There were no need of arsenals and forts.

3. Great is the evil in the domain of intellect. We know some things, 'tis true, but oh! how few indeed! The truth of yesterday, to-day is found to be error; and so, doubtless, will it be to-morrow. The press gives birth to books with harsh, discordant voices, vehement assertions are met by passionate denials, a babel of confusion rises from the field of intellectual combat. In theology, medicine, law, science, the learned disagree, and the bewildered onlookers sadly ask, When doctors disagree, who shall decide? As a vessel in a heavy gale and high running sea rolls from side to side and, raised on the crest of the wave and plunged into the trough of the sea, with all her timbers groaning, makes laborious headway toward port, so the intellect staggers and careens amid besetting difficulties toward the haven of truth.

4. There is, furthermore, the evil of honor. The poisoned tongue of slander besmirches our fair name and good character with the foulest filth, and no acid will suffice to restore the native

purity and luster. And he that filches from me my good name robs me of that which makes me poor indeed; for good name, in man or woman, is the immediate jewel of the soul. And, oh, how often has our heart been blistered and our soul fired with righteous indignation at this evil!

5. And, finally, there is the evil of soul. Divinely beautiful the soul came forth from the hand of her Maker, but, alas! sin fastened itself upon her and disfigured her visage and sullied her purity, by nature inclined her to evil. Idolatry turns us away from the one true God, leads us to take His name in vain, teaches us to render a superstitious worship to vain shadows. The fire of hate chars the soul, passion and lust petrify the feeling, avarice shrivels it, envy poisons it, an evil conscience curses it at all times. If we would arise from our degradation, the force of evil habits holds us down; evil examples confirm us in our way of wrong; temptations countless lure us to still lower depths; despair seizes the soul in a viselike grip; eternal damnation destroys it forever.

Sin is the evil of evils, and the evil of sin is self-will. On one side of his tent the Red Indian had a picture of the Good Spirit and on the other a picture of the Evil Spirit; he felt that both were wooing him, and that he must give himself to the one or the other. Dr. Faustus made a bargain with the Evil One and deliberately made over body and soul for the pleasures of sin for so many years. "Satanism" is a new religion in Paris; by

a "black sacrament" people bind themselves over to the service of Satan.

But there is no pleasure in sin. In Sanskrit the word for "sin" is the same as for "serpent," a *throttler*, a boa-constrictor, that embraces a man and crushes him to death. When a bear kills one of his reindeer, the Lapp hunts the bear and does not return till he brings the skin home; no bear ever lives to kill a second deer. "Evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him." Ps. 140, 11. Sir Noel Paton's picture, "The Pursuit of Pleasure," has a crowd of revelers, and above them the angel of retribution, an awful being with a huge drawn sword. "The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Is. 57, 20. 21. Even his sleep will be disturbed by nightmares. Though king of England, Richard III started up from his midnight couch and in agony cried out, "O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!" Even in her sleep Lady Macbeth walked the floor, trying to wash the bloody stains of murder from her hands, muttering, "Out, damned spot!" Lord Byron, young, beautiful, nobly born, gifted, admired, gave himself up to the lusts of the flesh — was it pleasure? On his thirty-third birthday he wrote:

Through life's dull road, so dim and dirty,
I have dragged to three and thirty;
What have these years left to me?
Nothing except thirty-three.

O yes, my noble lord, something more than merely a wasted life, your Lordship being witness:

My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone!

He tried to get rid of his grief by travel; he got a change of scenery, but not a change of mind —

What exile from himself can flee?
To zones, though more and more remote,
Still, still pursues where'er I be,
The blight of life — the demon Thought.

The wages of sin is death. And beyond the pillars of death lies the land of the damned, lurid in the light of hell.

"He fears nothing but sin," was said of St. Chrysostom to the Empress Eudoxia. May that be said of us! The little ermine in the Far North has hair white as the driven snow. When hunters wish to catch it, they spread filth around its hiding-place; for such is its passion for purity that it will rather die than stain its spotless coat. It may be called the saint among beasts. Kings wore ermine as the sign of purity, and our judges wear the "ermine." Every Christian ought to "wear the ermine" and die rather than sully the whiteness of the soul.

There is no real pleasure in sin, and there is no real pain in virtue. The pleasure in sin is fleeting, and the pain is lasting; the pain in virtue is fleeting and the pleasure everlasting. One drop

of sin has more evil in it than a sea of sorrow. "Outward troubles do not disturb inward peace, but an unholy affection doth. All the winds without cause not an earthquake; but that within the earth's own bowels doth," says Leighton. When we thus look at the world with all its woes, we are moved mournfully to say with the melancholy Dane: "This goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave, o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, — why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapors."

II.

What is the origin of all this evil? you ask. Ah, my friend, this is the world's great mystery. The historian, the prophet with the backward look, peering into the darkness of past ages, has not yet set his pen to paper to tell us; the philosopher has time and again sunk his plumb-line into the depths of this mystery, and though he has come to the end of his line, he has not sounded bottom; the poet has winged his imagination into the highest heights of fancy, but up to the present time it has been a bootless quiet; the explorer, the excavator, the antiquarian — all have knocked at the door of this riddle. They have pressed their ears close to the lips of the Sphinx, but an oppressive silence has been the only answer. But the Christian makes answer according to the Bible:

"The devil sinneth from the beginning," 1 John 3, 8, and that the devil got man to sin, Gen. 3, 1—7, and that by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin. Rom. 5, 12.

Why did God not kill the devil? Friday asked Robinson Crusoe. The Bible does not tell us, and therefore we do not know and cannot find out in this world. Seeing the world is so evil that, wherever we look, evil stares us in the face, why is it, we ask, that God does not take the evil away? If He be our Father, why does He not remove what hurts us long before it does hurt us, so that we have no need to pray, "Deliver us from evil!"?

In the first place, it is to be noted that these evils do not come from the mere pleasure of God, but, rather, that we ourselves bring upon ourselves the evils we complain of. Satan has no more power over us than that which we by sinning give him. And sin does not come from God, but is rather our own doing and our undoing. And if we are punished for our sins, it is because we actually force our reluctant Father to do so. "God doth not afflict willingly." Lam. 3, 33. On the other hand, it is to be noted that the consequences of sin are not really punishment for God's children, but rather fatherly chastenings, — not visitations of wrath, but loving corrections. And for sending this correction to His Christians, God has many reasons, of which we may mention six.

From our own experience and that of others

we see when things go according to man's will, he becomes secure, wilful, conceited, and obstinate; he is apt to abuse his good fortune and exalt himself above his fellows. But when trials, afflictions, and sorrows come to him, he becomes humble and modest. Prosperity is a greater test of character than adversity. Most men can bear adversity, few can successfully endure prosperity. And so the Bible says: "We are chastened of the Lord that we should not be condemned with the world." 1 Cor. 11, 32. "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." 2 Cor. 4, 16. "He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." 1 Pet. 4, 1. 2. When Cardinal Wolsey was hurled from power,

His overthrow heaped happiness upon him;
For then, and not till then, he felt himself
And found the blessedness of being little;
And to add greater honors to his age
Than man could give him, he died fearing God.

Another reason why God sends trouble is to wean us from this present world and let us long for the world to come. Were our path always strewn with roses, we would be so in love with the world we would never want to leave it. God therefore puts a drop of gall into our cup of pleasure to let us taste the bitterness. We know that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit,

even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Rom. 8, 22. 23.

A third reason for our trials is that God's power might be revealed in its fulness and His name glorified. We would never think of praising God's goodness and power did we not at times receive signal proofs of the same. In a general way, Peter always thought Christ could help, but he never realized it as he did when he would walk on the sea and the wave engulfed him and he cried, "Lord, help!" and the Lord did help. And so the sickness of Lazarus was not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. John 11, 4. And St. Paul says: "We would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life; but we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, which raiseth the dead; who delivered us from so great a death and doth deliver." 2 Cor. 1, 8—10.

A fourth reason. Did God not send trials and distress, our faith, charity, patience, hope, humility, prayer, etc., could not be exercised, strengthened, increased.

Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head.

For this reason it is that David says: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might

learn Thy statutes." Ps. 119, 71. For this reason it is that Isaiah says: "Lord, in trouble have they visited Thee; they poured out a prayer when Thy chastening was upon them." Is. 26, 16. For this reason it is that St. Peter says: "Now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. 1, 7. For this reason it is that we read in Hebrews: "God chasteneth us for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness. Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Heb. 12, 10, 11. For this reason it is that St. Paul says: "We glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed." Rom. 5, 3—5.

'Mid all my stores of blessings manifold
I count this chiefest, that my heart has bled.

Goldsmith says:—

Aromatic plants bestow
No spicy fragrance while they grow;
But, crushed or trodden to the ground,
Diffuse their balmy sweets around.

A fifth reason for which God sends affliction upon His people in this world is that they may receive a gracious reward of glory in the world to

come. And so the psalmist comfortingly says: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Ps. 126, 5. 6. And so the Apostle trustfully says: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." 2 Cor. 4, 17.

A sixth reason God has for sending us trouble is to make us like unto Christ to a certain degree. He, as the Master, bore His cross; we, as the servants, must likewise bear ours. And so St. Paul says: "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." 2 Cor. 4, 10. Those that love God He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son. Rom. 8, 29. As then we are to be glorified with Christ hereafter, so are we to suffer with Him in this life. Through the cross to the crown. Gustavus Adolphus said at Erfurt, "I shall count myself happy if my Lord Christ grants me grace to suffer for His name's sake." Eighteen hundred years ago the aged Ignatius was led to Rome by ten rough Roman soldiers to be thrown to the wild beasts for the entertainment of the Romans in the amphitheater. Did he whine and wail over this as an evil? Listen to him:—

"Come fire and iron, come grapplings with wild beasts, cuttings and manglings, the wrench-

ing of my bones, the hacking of my limbs, the crushings of my whole body; come cruel tortures of the devil to assail me, only be it mine to come to Jesus Christ."

III.

Though we have seen in a measure why God sends trials upon His people, nevertheless a general cry, loud and long, rises from the world's anguished heart up to the throne of God, and midst all variations the burden of this cry is, "Deliver us from evil!"

Even the dumb creation groaneth and travaileth in pain because it is subject unto vanity, and it groaneth to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Rom. 8, 19—22.

O God, the Fountain of perennial gladness!
Thy whole creation overflows with sadness;
Sighs, sounds, are full of sorrow and alarm;
Even sweet scents have but a pensive charm.

And the heathen world, how does it sit in darkness and wail in its misery! All its cruel tortures, all its wild dances and dissipations, all its bloody sacrifices of human lives, what is it all but a blind groping after, and piteous crying for, deliverance from evil? Look at the civilized world of to-day—look at its ball-rooms and theaters, look at its drinking and gambling, look at its diversions and debauches, its music, its art, and its literature, is it not all an attempt to drown some sorrow? Is it not all a despairing wail to be delivered from evil?

There is evil above, around, and in us; there is evil in the world and a skeleton in the closet. We ask its name, and the answer rings with a note of satanic laughter, "Our name is Legion!"

"Deliver us from evil," we say to the doctor; yet with all his formulas and prescriptions — vain incantations — he cannot banish evil. "Deliver us from evil," we say to the lawyer; yet with all his legal lore and ancient phrases he cannot lay the spirit of evil. "Deliver us from evil," we say to the priest; he may swing censers, sprinkle holy water, and mumble prayers in Latin, yet he does not know the "open sesame," and the spell is not broken, and so the heart still aches, and men go from soothsayer to sorcerer, and the evil is not exorcised; they remain under demoniacal possession and will deliver themselves: a pistol-shot is the last "good-by," or the specter moon listens to the gurgling waters closing over another unfortunate who will pillow herself upon the river's muddy bed.

The whole Church also from the earliest ages has brought this petition before God in the noble litany: —

From all sin; from all error; from all evil:

Good Lord, deliver us.

From the crafts and assaults of the devil; from sudden and evil death; from pestilence and famine; from war and bloodshed; from sedition and rebellion; from lightning and tempest; from all calamity by fire and water; and from everlasting death:

Good Lord, deliver us.

In all time of our tribulation; in all time of our prosperity; in the hour of death; and in the Day of Judgment:

Help us, good Lord.

We poor sinners do beseech Thee:

To hear us, O Lord God.

But will our Lord God help and deliver us? He will, for we pray:—

By the mystery of Thy holy incarnation; by Thy holy nativity; by Thy baptism, fasting, and temptation; by Thine agony and bloody sweat; by Thy cross and passion; by Thy precious death and burial; by Thy glorious resurrection and ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter:

Help us, good Lord.

On account of the suffering and death of Christ we are so confident that God will deliver us from evil. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John 3, 8. "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Heb. 2, 14, 15.

A great general led his soldiers into battle with the words, "Well, lads, there are your enemies; if you do not kill them, they will kill you." Just so with sin; there is no drawn battle: one must die.

Victor Hugo describes a man caught in the quicksands on the coast of Normandy. His feet

became like lumps of lead. He struggled with all his might. The more he struggled, the deeper he sank. Tired to death, he thought he would take a last look at the roofs of his native village. When he had given up all hope, friends threw a strong rope to him and drew him forth from his living grave. "Who shall deliver me?" Paul asks, and Paul answers, "I thank God through Jesus Christ, our Lord." Rom. 7, 24. 25. Though the lion had received a bullet and was within a few minutes of his death, he yet wounded and almost killed David Livingstone. So sin. "I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." 1 Tim. 4, 17.

But if it cost Christ His life to deliver us from evil, surely we must look upon all evil with untold horror, we must fling the accursed thing from us, and hate it with a perfect hatred. The prayer for deliverance from evil, if not followed by hatred of evil, is an idle breath, nay, hypocrisy, mockery, and blasphemous insult. The thought of fighting evil must ripen into holy resolve; the resolve must harden into heroic action; the action must become an adamant wall of godly habit. We must sincerely repent of all our sins and set our faces like flint against them; we must not turn around like Lot's wife to Sodom, not hunger for the fleshpots of Egypt like the Israelites, but look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith; we must strive to enter the strait gate; we must fight the good fight; we must run the race of salvation;

we must bear the cross on the rough way ; we must deny ourselves ; we must mortify our members ; we must crucify the flesh ; if necessary, we must cut off the right hand and pluck out the right eye ; if necessary, we must lay down our earthly life to gain the heavenly life. If it cost Christ the agony in Gethsemane, the suffering under Pontius Pilate, the shameful death on Calvary, to deliver you from the consequences of your sin, shall it not cost you an earnest, holy effort to beat down and overcome the evil ? If we pray, "Deliver us from evil," we also pledge our every effort to realize the prayer for us and for others. During the terrible French Revolution a poor dazed prisoner was set free from the Bastille, and the people gave him a few pennies. Full of pity for other prisoners he bought a caged bird and set the captive free. So we ; freed from evil, we free others.

"Deliver us from evil." God hears our prayer and fulfils our petition — no doubt of that fact ; but how does God deliver us ? God's ways are wonderful, they require close watching if you would understand them with your reason. "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of every temptation." The Lord knoweth, even if thou dost not see it.

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform.
Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan His works in vain ;
God is His own interpreter
And He will make it plain.

Sometimes, indeed, God hears us at once and as we desire; our wishes become facts before our very eyes, and we joyously say with the psalmist: "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Ps. 30, 5. Sometimes we may indeed say at once with St. Paul: "Who delivered us from so great a death and doth deliver; in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us." 2 Cor. 1, 10. Sometimes God indeed says: "I will turn their mourning into joy and will comfort them and make them rejoice from their sorrow." Jer. 31, 13.

So it is sometimes, but this is an evil world and always will be an evil world, and the deliverance from evil also consists in this, that God is with us with His help, that He strengthens our heart with comfort, that He gives us grace to bear the evil, that He supplies us with patience under the evil, that He speaks peace to our soul. When this is done, the burden is made easy, and so we are delivered from the evil of the evil. This is the experience of the saints. Listen to the psalmist: "In the multitude of my thoughts within me Thy comforts delight my soul." Ps. 94, 19. Listen to Hezekiah: "Behold, for peace I had great bitterness; but Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back." Is. 38, 17. Listen to St. Paul: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us

in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." 2 Cor. 1, 3—5.

God delivers, but sometimes it is by the skin of the teeth. God delivers, but we are plucked as a brand from the burning. God delivers, but we come as the prodigal after we have squandered our substance in riotous living. God delivers, but we barely escape from the avenger into the city of refuge. Num. 35. God delivers, but we must jump from the burning vessel into the life-boat.

Safe home, safe home, in port!
Rent cordage, shattered deck,
Torn sails, provisions short,
And only not a wreck.

The prize, the prize, secure!
The wrestler nearly fell;
Bare all he could endure,
And bare not always well.

No more the foe can harm,
No more of leaguered camp,
And cry of night-alarm,
And need of ready lamp:
And yet how nearly he had failed;
How nearly had the foe prevailed!

The final and complete deliverance for which we pray is that when our last hour is come, God would take us from this vale of tears unto Himself in heaven. Yet this prayer must not proceed

from dissatisfaction with our evil lot in this life, but rather from our dissatisfaction with our sinfulness. Because things did not go according to his liking, Elijah, under the juniper-tree, asked God to let him die; of course, this was a cowardly prayer. Jonah was disgusted with the world, and in a fit of ill temper he wanted to die; of course, this was a peevish prayer. St. Paul was dissatisfied with his own sinfulness; of that he wanted to be rid, and so he cried out: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7, 24. In spite of his most strenuous attempts, Paul could not live in perfect holiness, and for this reason he would be delivered from this life and be with Christ. Phil. 1, 23. For this reason he groaned, earnestly desiring to be clothed with the house which is from heaven, willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. 2 Cor. 5, 28. With calm confidence he says: "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen." 2 Tim. 4, 18. Full of joy at seeing Christ and enfolding Him in his arms, Simeon cried out with a note of triumph: "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel." Luke 2, 29—32. Sophia Charlotte, the brilliant queen of

Frederick I of Prussia, on her deathbed said to Fraeulein von Poellnitz: "Weep not for me, for now I shall learn the true inwardness of all things, which Leibnitz could never explain to me." The German Emperor Rudolph II, on his deathbed, said, "In my youth I was in Spain, and my father sent a messenger for me to come home; I was so happy I could not sleep all night. How much happier ought I to be now that my heavenly Father is calling me to the eternal fatherland, which He has regained for me by the blood of His Son."

That is the true, full, and final deliverance. Now is the spirit more or less fettered with the devil, the world, and the flesh; then it shall be delivered from sin's curse, from sin's penalty, from sin's guilt, from sin's lordship. Now is our soul more or less affected by sin: our judgment is prejudiced and perverted and purblind; our imagination is unruly and impure; our memory is treacherous and full of bitterness and unhappiness; our instincts impel us to all evil; our affections are unholy; then all shall be delivered from bondage and changed — "the old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Now the glorious and wonderful structure of our body, the home of the soul, shares in the consequences of the Fall and is subject to disease and decay and death, but then this vile body shall be changed that it be glorious like Christ's own glorious body, according to the mighty working

whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself. Such is the full and final deliverance for which the Son of Man bids us pray, and which the Lord, our God, will grant us for Christ's sake. And such being the case,

Who, who would live alway, away from his God?
Away from yon heaven, that blissful abode,
Where the rivers of pleasure flow o'er the bright
 plains,
And the noontide of glory eternally reigns;

Where the saints of all ages in harmony meet,
Their Savior and brethren transported to greet,
While the songs of salvation unceasingly roll,
And the smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul?

Our Father's Doxology.

In the introduction to the Lord's Prayer we rise to heaven and begin with our Father in heaven and pray for heavenly things; in the Fourth Petition we come down to earth and ask for the body's bread; in the last petitions we look, as it were, down to hell and ask to be delivered from Satan and all the evils wherewith he can in any way afflict us. Now, in the doxology, we again return to heaven and ascribe to our Father the kingdom and power and glory.

Some deny that this doxology really belongs to the Lord's Prayer; they contend that it is a later addition for liturgical use. St. Luke and the best manuscripts of St. Matthew omit it. Alexander Pope, the Roman Catholic poet, imagined that the doxology was written by Luther. Others just as earnestly contend that the doxology is a part of the Lord's Prayer: the old Greek Church Fathers, such as Chrysostomus, Theophylactus, Euthymius, and others, read it in their Greek copies, and the ancient Syrian version also contains it. Be that as it may, it does not matter much. So much is certain, the doctrine of the doxology is Scriptural. We find the same doctrine in 1 Chron. 29, 11: "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as Head above all."

I.

The Doxology Is an Argument.

With the doxology we support and reenforce our prayer and offer reasons why God should hear our prayer.

1. "For Thine is the kingdom" — Thou art a King, act as a King. Caesar said no music was so pleasing as the requests of his friends. Nero was cruel and ruled but a short time, yet he gave to his friends gifts then worth about five hundred million dollars. Alexander invited a friend to ask for any gift, and it was asked; the treasurer thought the gift too great for any subject to ask. — "But not too great for Alexander to give."

Thou art coming to a King,
Large petitions with thee bring,
For His power and grace are such
None can ever ask too much.

A king has the privilege of pardoning a criminal after the court has condemned him to death. We have been convicted and condemned. We come to Thee, our King, and crave Thy pardon — "for Thine is the kingdom."

A king can make a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that;
But an honest man's above his might.

When one asked to be knighted, King James said, "I can make him a nobleman, but only God Almighty can make him a gentleman." We go to our King for honors: a stroke with the royal sword makes us princes of the realm, God's noble-

men, and at the same time it also changes us so that we bear "without reproach the ancient name of gentleman." We ask Thee, O Lord, to grant us these favors — "for Thine is the kingdom."

2. "For Thine is the power" — Thou art not a king as John Lackland; Thou hast not simply the title, but also the power; Thou reignest and Thou rulest; Thine is the power. King Canute could not awe back the waves, but at Thy rebuke they fled to make way for Moses and the Israelites, and at Thy command they rushed together and crushed the life out of Pharaoh and his horsemen. Yea, "Thine is the power."

"I wish it were night, or the Prussians would come," sighed the worried Wellington at a critical moment at Waterloo, but he had no power over the night. "But Thine is the power," O King, and at Thy command the night tarried within her chambers until Joshua had gained the victory.

"Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean" — "for Thine is the power." The woman had spent all her substance on the doctors and in vain; Thou didst cure her — "for Thine is the power." With all our trials and troubles we confidently come to Thee for help and cure — "for Thine is the power."

When the philosophers asked for immortality, even Alexander the "Great" had to admit his helplessness. Our King has brought life and immortality to light and gives it to His people. Yea, verily, "Thine is the power."

3. "For Thine is the glory!" — if Thou wilt hear our prayer. And, therefore, hear our prayer, good Lord. "Call upon Me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." Ps. 50, 15. These are Thy words of command and of promise. Driven by command and drawn by promise, we now call upon Thee to hear our prayer, now in the day of trouble, and we pledge ourselves to give Thee glory. Thy glory is the plea and promise of our prayers. We pray as did Moses: "Pardon the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of Thy mercy." We pray as did Joshua: "O Lord, what shall I say when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies, and what wilt Thou do unto Thy great name?" Help, or the disgrace will be Thine. We pray as did David: "For Thy name's sake pardon mine iniquity." We pray as did Jeremiah: "O the Hope of Israel, do Thou it for Thy name's sake." We pray as did Elijah; "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and that I am Thy servant. . . . Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that Thou art the Lord God." 1 Kings 18, 36. 37. We pray as did Daniel: "O Lord, hearken and do for Thine own sake, for Thy people are called by Thy name." We pray as did our Savior: "Father, glorify Thy name." We pray: "We have heard with our ears, and our fathers have told us, what things Thou didst in their days and in the old time

before them. O Lord, arise, help us, and deliver us for Thy name's sake! O Lord, arise, help us and deliver us for Thine honor!"

II.

The Doxology Is a Confession.

By confessing, by recalling the fact to our remembrance, we assure ourselves of the fact and strengthen our trust. And of this we stand in great need at one time or another, for we are all doubting Thomases, and we all need every shred of assurance and every crumb of comfort we can lay hold on.

1. "Thine is the kingdom!" — Thou art our King, and Thou wilt treat us royally when we come to Thee as Thy liege subjects. "Thine is the kingdom!" — not the devil's. The devil comes to me, shows me all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and says: "All these things will I give thee if Thou wilt fall down and worship me." I shall pay no attention to him; "for Thine is the kingdom," and it is the Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom. In all trials and troubles, in all rebellions and revolutions, in all ups and downs, in health and wealth, in dearth and death, I shall steady myself on this pillar of truth — "Thine is the kingdom."

At one time there were fourteen discrowned kings in Europe. The queen of the Sandwich Islands had a picture of King Louis Philippe and of Napoleon III sent as tokens of alliance with

France. In each case the king was reigning when the picture was shipped and discrowned before it came to the Sandwich Islands. But "Thine is the kingdom *forever and ever!*"

2. "Thine is the power!" — Thou canst fulfil all our petitions, though we asked things so great that no one else could possibly grant them. The devil is the strong man armed, but Thou art the Stronger One, "for Thine is the power." Thou hast overcome him, hast stripped him of his power, hast delivered us from his power, hast destroyed his prison-house of sin and his charnel-house of hell. Thou hast been our Help in ages past, so wilt Thou be our Hope for years to come. In Thee we trust, "for Thine is the power." The proud Persian king Xerxes had the sea whipped to show that it also was his slave. A few months after the same proud monarch fled home in a poor fishing-boat, fearful lest the "slave" might swallow the lord. When the howling storm and the surging waves threatened to engulf our Lord and His disciples, He arose from His slumber and rebuked the winds and the waves, and as whipped spaniels they crouched to His feet, and there was a great calm. When the Syrian king sent his captain Naaman with letters to the king of Israel, demanding that the captain be cured of his leprosy, it is no wonder that the king of Israel said: "Am I God to kill and to make alive that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?" 2 Kings 5, 7. One king sent to

another king for help, and neither king could help. But our King cured leprosy and raised the daughter of Jairus from her death-bed and the young man of Nain from the coffin and Lazarus from the tomb. Yea, verily, "Thine is the power." Having seen the manifold proofs of Thy power, we confess Thy power, and in all dangers we will calmly trust Thy power.

3. "Thine is the glory!" — Such is the confession we make, and while we make the confession and ponder the truth, it will dawn upon our minds that all the things we ask for in the Lord's Prayer are not only for our good, but also for God's glory. God's glory will be enhanced if He grants these petitions. So we may rest content that these petitions will be heard by God, not only for our sake, but also for the sake of the glory God derives from granting them.

III.

The Doxology Is a Pledge.

1. "Thine is the kingdom!" — Then there is no use denying it and defying it; if surrender we must, we may as well do it promptly and loyally; ours is a lost cause, and we may as well accept the new order of things and adjust ourselves to our circumstances and be reconstructed. "The king is dead!" "Long live the king!" "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way." Ps. 2, 12. We bend the knee and swear fealty. "All hail the power of Jesus' name, . . . and crown Him Lord of all!"

In 1557 Coligny held for the wretched Henry II the town of St. Quentin with its starving, fever-stricken inhabitants. The Spaniards under Philip II tried all kinds of promises to seduce the people from their allegiance. Coligny wrote on a piece of parchment: *Regem habemus* ("We have a king") and with an arrow shot it into the Spanish camp. "We have a king," that was answer enough to all seductive promises. And have we no king? Is not Christ our King, to whom we have sworn allegiance for life and death? Satan and the world would wean and win us from our Lord with all manner of enticing promises. But if those of St. Quentin could be true and loyal to their miserable king, starved and feverish as they were, surely we will remain firm and loyal to our King, Christ, the Lord of heaven and earth, who gave Himself for us, suffered and died for us and our salvation. We acknowledge Christ to be our King with our lips; with our lives let us do the same. Can we not defend His kingdom more than we have been doing? Can we not extend His kingdom more than we have been doing? Are we as jealous of His honor as we ought to be? Do we praise and magnify His name as we ought to do? "We have a King!" — let that be our inspiration and our benediction in our warfare against all evil in all places at all times.

2. "Thine is the power!" — When in ancient battles a soldier asked for quarter to save his life, he became the slave of the victor, and it was

utterly dishonorable to betray the trust and show ingratitude. "Thine is the power!" We confess God's grace has subdued our rebellious spirit, given us quarter and spared our life; He has been victor, we the vanquished; His is the power, we are His slaves evermore; and God forbid that we should at any time prove unworthy of His favor so freely extended!

"Thine is the power!" — And what does that teach you? God girds Himself with power. He walks upon the wings of the wind; He sends the bolt of lightning with the flash of His eyes; He directs the course of sun, moon, and stars; yes, and He feeds the sparrows, He clothes the lilies of the field, He has counted the hairs on your head. The greatest does not appal Him, the smallest does not confuse Him. Can you, then, oppose Him? Can you, then, escape Him? Can you, then, deceive Him? Can you, then, placate Him? "Thine is the power!" — Your only safety lies in running the path of His commandments, your only hope is to walk humbly with your God and bind His Law and Gospel as frontlets over your eyes.

Make me to walk in Thy commands —

'Tis a delightful road;

Nor let my head or heart or hands

Offend against my God.

3. "Thine is the glory!" — "I am the Lord; that is My name; and My glory will I not give to another, neither My praise to graven images." Is. 42, 8. "I, the Lord, thy God, am a jealous

God," therefore "Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." Matt. 4, 10. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory." As a candle is consumed by giving light, so should a Christian spend and be spent in advancing the glory of God. A thoughtless young Scotch noblewoman was humming the first words of her *Shorter Catechism* — "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." "How grand that is," she said to herself, "and how little and mean my chief end in life has been!" That was the parting of the ways with her, and many churches and missions after more than a hundred years are the memorials of the piety of Lady Glenorchy.

"Thine is the glory!" — If we take off the shell, we shall find that selfishness is the real kernel of the sins against each one of the Ten Commandments. Selfishness, the desire to know evil and good, to be like God, led Eve to commit the first sin, which is the source of original sin, which is the source of all actual sins, whatever their particular form. As long as a man thinks himself a self-made man, he worships his maker, and a poor idol he worships, and his worship is one of meanness. As long as a man regards himself the sun around which his world must turn, his motives and aspirations and actions are petty, mean, contemptible; he barter his image of God for a bite of the forbidden fruit; he parts with his birthright for a mess of pottage; he sells

his Savior for a few pieces of silver. "He becomes as the serpent for malignity, as the tiger for fury, as the wolf for greed, as the swine for degradation." Yes, he sinks much below the beasts that perish.

Unless above himself he can
Erect himself, how mean a thing is man!

"Thine is the glory!" — Christ would cast the demon of selfishness from our heart; He would knock, enter, and take possession of it, so that man might shape all his actions to advance the glory of God. That should be his inspiration for his work. That should be the sunlight in which he lives and labors.

"Thine is the glory!" — And we promise to step aside and stand in the shade and not obtrude ourselves upon the scene. Self must be effaced, or Christ will be defaced. If self is graced, Christ is disgraced. It comes hard thus to deny self, we always ache to share in the glory. We do not naturally object to doing our full duty, but we do naturally object to calling ourselves unprofitable servants after having done our full duty. Here we pledge to retain nothing for ourselves, but to give unto God all that belongs to Him — "All glory be to God on high."

"Thine is the glory!" — The primary idea of glory is splendor, brilliancy, light. God covers Himself with light as with a garment. God is light. In darkness a diamond is dark. But let light fall on it, and you will "see depth opening

beyond depth, until it looks as if there were no end to the chambers of splendor that are shut up in that little stone; see flake after flake of luminous color floating up out of the unseen fountain which lies somewhere in the jewel's heart." The immortal soul, created in the image of God, is dark in the darkness of sin, but when touched with the glory, the light of God, it also shines and sparkles to the glory of God. Cast off the works of darkness, put on the armor of light. Walk ye in the light. Be ye the children of light. Arise, shine; for thy light has come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. The Lord shall rise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light and thy God thy glory. Thy people also shall be all righteous, that I may be glorified.

IV.

The Doxology Is a Praise-Giving.

We have presented our petitions upon God's command and promise, in Christ's name and for His sake, and we know these petitions are pleasing to God and heard by Him. They will be heard by Him in one way or another, but always in a way to serve our best interests, and therefore we go away full of confidence, thanking and praising God for the benefits to be received, as if they had been received, for faith is the evidence of things not seen. Prayer and praise are like

the double action of the lungs: the air that is inhaled by prayer is exhaled by praise.

1. "Thine is the kingdom!" — "The Lord reigneth, He is clothed with majesty. . . . Thy throne is established of old." Ps. 93, 1. 2. "All the gods of the nations are idols; but the Lord made the heavens." Ps. 96, 5. Though he lay dying in a cheerless and comfortless hut in New Chwang, William Burns, the missionary to China, ended his life with a shout of victory, "For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever! Amen."

"Thine is the kingdom!" — Pharaoh would not believe it despite all proofs, and at the very last set out with his horsemen and chariots to defy the kingdom of God. But the shores of the Red Sea were soon strewn with wrecks of Egypt's proud chivalry, and Miriam took her timbrel and answered the women: "Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea!" Ex. 15, 21.— Yes, the kingdom was the Lord's.

"Thine is the kingdom!" — Nebuchadnezzar was puffed up with his own power and looked upon the great Babylon which he had built, and would have himself worshiped. Not long after, he was as the beasts of the field. Yes, the kingdom was the Lord's.

"Thine is the kingdom!" — The priests of the Jews; the leaders of superstition and fanaticism and heathen idolatry; the philosophers of Greece;

the emperors of Rome: all rose up in their strength to do battle against the Crucified, preached by the apostles and evangelists. Their pride and their power have been laid low, and towering o'er the wrecks of time triumphantly stands the cross of the Christ. — Yes, "Thine is the kingdom."

"Thine is the kingdom!" — With unspeakable selfishness and arrogance, Pope Leo X sat as the Antichrist in the temple of God and would continue to rule the world's conscience with an iron rod in spite of the protests of Luther. On one side were arrayed the Pope with the lords spiritual, and the powerful Emperor Charles V with the lords temporal; on the other side stood a lone monk. Which won? The papacy was struck with palsy. From the fountains of eternal light, God's holy Bible, a flash was turned on Rome, and the Antichrist was revealed for the execration of a conscience-burdened humanity. Yes, "Thine is the kingdom."

2. "Thine is the power!" — "At Thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep." Ps. 76, 6. "O sing unto the Lord a new song; for He hath done marvelous things; His right hand and His holy arm hath gotten Him the victory." Ps. 98, 1.

"Thine is the power!" — "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God." Ps. 62, 11. "The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are

clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead." Rom. 1, 20.

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim:
Th' unwearied sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's power display
And publishes to every land
The work of an almighty Hand.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale
And nightly to the listening earth
Repeats the story of her birth,
While all the stars that round her burn
And all the planets in their turn
Confirm the tidings as they roll
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though in solemn silence all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball,
What though no real voice nor sound
Amid their radiant orbs be found,
In reason's ear they all rejoice
And utter forth a glorious voice,
Forever singing as they shine,
"The Hand that made us is divine."

"Thine is the power!" — Not only do the colossal worlds so far away from us proclaim God's power, the tiny speck of dust dancing in the summer air, the liquid gem sparkling on the blade of grass waiting to be kissed up by the rays of the sun, also teach the power of God and heap

shame and rebuke on the infidel. We cannot explore the caverns of the mysteries of the great things in this world, we cannot explore the chambers of mysteries of the most humble and best known. Space, time, life—who can explain them? Who can understand them?

3. "Thine is the glory!" — "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth; make a loud noise and rejoice and sing praise. Sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp and the voice of a psalm. With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King." Ps. 98, 4—6. "We praise Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory." "We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which wert and art and art to come, because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power and hast reigned." "I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne; . . . and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." Rev. 5, 11. 12.

The kingdom, Lord, is Thine,
The right o'er all to reign;
None can assail Thy throne divine,
Nor of Thy laws complain.

The power, O Lord, is Thine,
To vindicate the right;
With strength Thy love doth intertwine,
Mercy allied to might.

The glory, Lord, is Thine:
All praise to Thee be given!
Through all Thy works Thy wonders shine
In earth and highest heaven.

Forevermore the praise,
The kingdom, power, belong
To Thee; throughout eternal days
Creation's endless song.

Glory be to God the Father!
Glory be to God the Son!
Glory be to God the Spirit!
Great Jehovah, Three in One!
Glory, glory, glory, glory,
While eternal ages run!

Glory be to Him who loved us,
Washed us from each spot and stain!
Glory be to Him who brought us,
Made us kings with Him to reign!
Glory, glory, glory, glory,
To the Lamb that once was slain!

Glory to the King of angels!
Glory to the Church's King!
Glory to the King of nations!
Heaven and earth, your praises bring!
Glory, glory, glory, glory,
To the King of Glory bring!

Glory, blessing, praise eternal!
Thus the choir of angels sings:
Honor, riches, power, dominion!
Thus its praise creation brings;
Glory, glory, glory, glory,
Glory to the King of kings!

Our Father's "Amen."

"Amen!" that is, So let it be!
Confirm our faith continually,
That we may doubt not, but believe
That what we ask we shall receive.
Thus in Thy name and at Thy word
We say, "Amen; O hear us, Lord!"

Luther.

I.

The Meaning.

There are some words we use very often; they sound so sweet and beautiful, there seems to be a certain holiness clinging to them. We have heard them from earliest childhood, and so we also use them and yet do not know their meaning; and since they are so familiar, we never stop to learn the meaning. Such words are "Selah," "Kyrie Eleison," "Hosanna," "Hallelujah," and "Amen."

With an "Amen" we end all our prayers, and many think it only a signal that the prayer is ended. Is it no more than this? Let us see.

The first use of the word "Amen" occurs among the children of Israel in the wilderness more than 3,500 years ago, and since it has been used in an unbroken line up to the present day in the synagogues of this unique and ancient people. From the synagogues of the Jews the "Amen" passed into the churches of the Christians. St. Jerome tells us: "At the end of every public

utterance of prayer and praise, the 'Amen' of the people sounded like the murmur of the sea or the voice of thunder, while the hollow idols, and their temples that were empty, did echo and rebound the church's Amen, so that their fabrics shook." And Dean Stanley writes: "The consecration of the Lord's Supper was not complete till it had been ratified in the most solemn way by the congregation. For it was at this point that there came, like the peal of thunder, the one word which has lasted through all changes and all liturgies; the word which was intended to express the entire truthful assent of the people to what was done and said — the word 'Amen.'"

We see that the "Amen" is venerable with age. Our respect for this word must grow when we learn that "Amen" is a name of God Himself, a sacred word as well as an ancient word. In Is. 65, 16 we twice read the words "the God of truth," which is a translation of "the God of Amen," an expression similar to "the Lord of hosts." In the New Testament "Amen" is used as a name of Christ — "these things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God." Rev. 3, 14.

"Amen" is a favorite word of Christ; He uses it no less than one hundred and three times in the four gospels; twenty-five times in John alone He uses "Verily, verily," that is "Amen, Amen."

The root idea of "Amen" is to bear up as

a rock bears up a house; it is also to rest on as a house rests on a rock; and this is the word for "believe" or "trust." From the same root comes the word for a child leaning upon its mother. "And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and *amened* it, and became nurse unto it." Ruth 4, 16. Moses asks: "Can I carry this people in my bosom as a nursing father, an *amening* father, beareth the sucking child?" Num. 11, 12. The people of Anyteum had no faith or trust and so, of course, had no word for it in their language. So when Dr. Inglis came to the word "believe," he did not know how to translate it. He saw a baby leaning upon its mother's breast — "I have found it! Here is the missing word. I shall get the word for a baby leaning upon its mother, and it shall go into the Bible for *believing* or *trusting*."

Luther calls the believers "the Amen-folk," because they say Amen to all God does and rest on His promises. John leaned on the Savior's breast; all believers do that —

Jesus, Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly.

At the beginning of a sentence, "Amen" means "truth, reality, firmness"; at the end it means "certainly, most assuredly, so it is." So the "Amen" not simply gives notice of the end of the prayer, but is a separate prayer, giving force and value to all the foregoing petitions; the "Amen" is the explosive power of faith, sending

with swiftness and directness the other petitions to the throne of God, praying that the other prayers may be heard. It is the stamp of our sincerity, the fervency of our longing, the expression of our confidence, the seal of faith pressed upon the prayer. The "Amen" is the muscle in our arm of prayer, whereby we move the arm of Him who moves the world. As the arm of a weak infant can turn the face of its mother to itself, so the confident "Amen" turns God's face to him that prays.

When a key-stone is properly placed, the whole arch stands, a thing of strength and beauty; if it is not put in place, the other stones fall to the ground — there is nothing to unite them; the "Amen" is the key-stone holding all the other petitions in place; if the confident "Amen" is not there, the other petitions drop to the ground. When a good marksman shoots at game, he knows he has brought it down and looks for it. He may find it at once. He may also have to search a long time amid the thick weeds. He may not be able to find it and must turn away. But he knows he has brought down his game; his aim was true. So the "Amen" of the believers' prayer. He knows his prayer is heard. Sometimes he sees at once how it is answered; sometimes he must search a long time; sometimes he may not be able to find the answer, on account of the weakness of his eyes or the dense weeds of the cares of the world; but he knows his aim was true, he knows

his prayer was heard. We write our friend for a favor; we know he will do it, and so we thank him in advance. So in prayer do we say the Doxology and "Amen" as soon as the petitions are uttered; before God has granted them, we praise Him. In our prayers we do just as Christ did, John 11, 41. Lazarus lay dead in his grave, Jesus had not yet spoken a word about raising him or praying His Father to raise him, and yet our Lord already said: "Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me. And I knew that Thou hearest Me always." And after this thanksgiving Jesus cried, "Lazarus, come forth!" Moses stood on Nebo's height and beheld the beautiful panorama of the Promised Land beyond the swelling Jordan: on the lofty peaks of the faithful "Amen" we stand and behold all our petitions fulfilled by our gracious God, and we glorify Him accordingly. The believing "Amen" casts the mountains of sin into the sea and turns the rivers of God's mercy upon the soul.

II.

Why am I certain that a true prayer will be answered by God?

1. Because God has commanded me to pray. Had God not commanded me to pray to Him, it would indeed be insufferable impertinence for the sinful rebel and traitor to come near to the holy God. But God having given the command, it is just as insufferable impertinence to neglect prayer.

The command to pray is clear and frequent. Ask; seek; knock. Matt. 7, 7. "Seek ye My face." Ps. 27, 8. "Call upon Me in the day of trouble." Ps. 50, 15. "Pray without ceasing." 1 Thess. 5, 17. "Men ought always to pray and not to faint." Luke 18, 11. "Continuing instant in prayer." Rom. 12, 12. "Praying always with all prayer." Eph. 6, 18. "Continue in prayer." Col. 4, 2. "Watch unto prayer." 1 Pet. 4, 7. If you are fearful to approach the Lord in prayer, take these commands of His and hold them up before you as a shield. God cannot disown His handwriting, and He will accept you for His name's sake.

2. God has promised to hear my true prayer. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Matt. 7, 7. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you." John 16, 23; 15, 7. 16; 14, 13; Mark 11, 24; Luke 11, 9; Jas. 1, 5; 1 John 3, 22. "Call upon Me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee." Ps. 50, 15; Job 22, 27; Ps. 91, 15; 107, 6. 13. 19. "This is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us; and if we know that He hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him." 1 John 5, 14. 15.

3. Christ Himself prays for me.

"If any man sin, we have an Advocate with

the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2, 1. 2. "Christ died, yea rather, is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Rom. 8, 34. "There is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." 1 Tim. 2, 5. 6. "Christ ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. 7, 25. "Christ is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Heb. 9, 24.

4. The Holy Spirit prays for me.

"The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." Rom. 8, 26. 27.

5. The whole Church prays for me.

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Jas. 5, 16. Now, if all righteous men, the whole communion of saints, the whole Church of God, unite their effectual fervent prayers in my behalf, surely God cannot turn a deaf ear to these entreaties, but will open His heart and hand to shower all needed blessings upon me. Such prayer is always and everywhere

offered up for me when, *e. g.*, the Lord's Prayer is sent to the throne of God.

In view of all this we say "Amen, Amen, that is, Yea, yea, it shall be so." Amen.

III.

If God has commanded us to pray, and if God has promised to hear our prayer, how is it, then, that so many people complain that their prayers are not answered? St. James (4, 3) explains that, "Ye ask and receive not because ye ask amiss."

The only true God is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Triune God, the Holy Trinity. Many prayers are not offered to Him. All such prayers are offered to an idol and are idolatry. Is it any wonder these prayers are not answered?

Some people ask for sinful things. The poor Hindu thug asks his goddess for help in doing murder; the misguided Italian bandit asks the Virgin Mary for success in his robbery. Are all "Christians" free from such "prayers"? Is it any wonder such "prayers" are not heard?

Some people expect to be heard "for their much speaking." The Hindu *fakir* spends a whole day simply repeating the name of his god; the Buddhist *bonze* rattles off his magic formula like an endless chain; the Mohammedan tirelessly calls out, "God is great"; the Tartar thinks he is really praying thousands of prayers as his windmill reels them off; the Roman Catholic

drops a bead at every *Ave Maria* and *Paternoster* and thinks the more he counts, the more he prays. How often do we *say* our prayers with our hearts far from God? Is it any wonder God does not hear when we only *say* our "prayers" and not *pray* our prayers?

Some people pray in the strength of their own righteousness. Apollonius of Tyana frankly demanded, "Give me, O ye gods, give me my dues!" The Pharisee stood in the Temple, praying, "I thank Thee, God, that I am not as other men are," and on the strength of his righteousness he expected an answer to his prayer.

Bethink Thee, Lord, while Thou and all the saints
Enjoy themselves in heaven; and men on earth
House in the shade of comfortable roofs,
Sit with their wives by fires, eat wholesome food,
And wear warm clothes, and even beasts have stalls,
I, 'tween the spring and downfall of the light,
Bow down one thousand and two hundred times
To Christ, the Virgin Mother, and the saints;
Or in the night, after a little sleep,
I wake; the chill stars sparkle; I am wet
With drenching dews or stiff with crackling frost,
I wear an undrest goat-skin on my back;
A grazing iron collar grinds my neck;
And in my weak, lean arms I lift the cross.

Such self-righteous "prayers," of course, cannot be heard. We are to pray in the name of Jesus, for Christ's sake, John 16, 23, trusting in what Christ has earned for us by His life, suffering, and death.

Some people pray without really meaning it. Wallowing in the filthy lusts of the flesh, Augustine prayed God for deliverance, secretly hoping God would *not* hear him just yet, in order that he might sin a little longer, as he tells us in his *Confessions*.

Oh, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? "Forgive me my foul murder"?
That cannot be, since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder.
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen,
May one be pardoned and retain th' offense?

The miserable king answers his own question :

My words fly up, my thoughts remain below;
Words without thoughts never to heaven go.

Some people pray without really believing that God will hear them. Such unbelief is an insult to God; it is doubting His promises. Is it any wonder their prayers are not answered when their very prayers are insults? "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, *believing*, ye shall receive." Matt. 21, 22.

Some people "pray" to God, dictating to Him just what and when and how He is to do for them, and are enraged when God will not be their most humble, dutiful, and obedient servant;—as the Breton peasant flogs the image of the saint who has not given him a good crop; as a certain German nobleman, who fired his shotgun toward heaven to kill God because it had rained on a certain day against his wishes; as Henry II of

England, on losing Le Mans, would spite God, saying, "Since Thou hast taken from me the town I loved best, where I was born and where my father lies buried, I will have my revenge on Thee too; I will rob Thee of that thing Thou lovest most in me!"

Some people are most unreasonable in their prayers: they do not want consumption, but they will not breathe fresh air; they want no malaria, but they will not move from the swamps; they want no typhoid, but they will not get pure water; they want no dyspepsia, but they will not eat plain food; they want good wages, but they will not practise to become experts in their profession or trade; they want customers, but they will not attend to business, etc., etc. Is it any wonder such prayers are not answered?

Some people are ever ready to ask, but never ready to thank. But the command is, "*With thanksgiving* let your requests be made known unto God." Phil. 4, 6. If people refuse to go about it in the right way, is it any wonder their prayers are not heard?

Some people bother the Lord with things to which they should attend themselves. "Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me." And He said unto him, "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" That man was covetous. Luke 12, 13—15. Is it a wonder such selfish prayers are not heard?

Some people want to use the Lord as a tool.

The mother of Zebedee's children came to Christ to be forehanded and take a mean advantage of the other ten disciples and get special privileges for her two boys. Matt. 20, 20—23. Is it any wonder Christ refused such a prayer?

Sometimes we ask for harmful things, and the Lord replies, "Ye know not what ye ask," Matt. 20, 22, and withholds them from us. He hears our prayers; not the letter, but the spirit.

We, ignorant of ourselves,
Beg often our own harms, which the Wise Powers
Deny us for our good; so find we *profit*
By *losing* of our prayers,

truly says Shakespeare. Therefore we pray:—

Not what we wish, but what we *want*,
Thy bounteous grace supply;
The good, unasked, in mercy grant;
The ill, though asked, deny.

Sometimes we ask for a thing, and the Lord refuses it because we do not need it. At the battle of Cressy the young Prince of Wales rushed into the very thickest of the fight and was almost surrounded by the French. Seeing his danger, he dispatched a messenger to the king for help, which, strange to say, was promptly refused. "Return to those that sent thee, Sir Thomas; let the boy win his spurs!" was the reply of Edward III. When the message was brought back, every arm struck out with new power, and the chivalry of France was routed. By withholding help, the king saved his son from mediocrity

and made him the hero of Cressy and gave him a place in history as the famous Black Prince.

Sometimes we ask for an earthly gift, and the Lord gives a spiritual gift, something much better. Paul three times asked to be relieved of the "thorn in the flesh," but the Lord instead assured His noble servant of His grace. 2 Cor. 12, 8, 9.

You think our prayers He does not heed
Because He often answers "nay";
And were that all He did indeed,
I scarcely would your plea gainsay.

But if beside the "nay" there be
Some better boon than that we sought,
Methinks a senseless churl is he
Who says his prayer no answer got.

If we keep our eyes open, we may in time see why God said "nay" to our words, but "yea" to our real desires, and then we will thank Him for our "unanswered" prayers, as did Oliver Huckel in the following:—

I thank Thee, Lord, for mine unanswered prayers—
Unanswered save Thy quiet, kindly "nay";
Yet it seemed hard among my heavy cares
That bitter day.

I wanted joy; but Thou didst know for me
That sorrow was the gift I needed most,
And in its mystic depths I learned to see
The Holy Ghost.

I wanted health; but Thou didst bid me sound
The secret treasures of pain,
And in the moans and groans my heart oft found
Thy Christ again.

I wanted wealth; 'twas not the better part;
There is a wealth with poverty oft given,
And Thou didst teach me of the gold of heart,
Best gift of Heaven.

I thank Thee, Lord, for these unanswered prayers
And for Thy word, the quiet, kindly "nay."
'Twas Thy withholding lightened all my cares
That blessed day.

Sometimes we pray, and the Lord says, "Mine hour is not yet come." But when His hour comes, His help also comes, as at the marriage at Cana. John 2, 1—11. God promised the Woman's Seed, and Eve, soon after, thought He had come; but the "fulness of the time" was come only after about 4,000 years, notwithstanding the repeated prophecies, the longings of the seers, the desires of nations. Holy Writ long ago told us the Day of Judgment is near at hand, and yet it has not come. "But the Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness." 2 Pet. 3, 9. "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry." Hab. 2, 3. In these circumstances we say with Jacob: I wait for Thy salvation. Monica prayed that her son might stay in Carthage to avoid the temptations of Rome. Augustine went to Rome and in Milan, through the preaching of Ambrose, found God. Was his mother's prayer answered? When a certain astronomer pointed his telescope to the sky one night and observed a star oscillating, he believed that

another star was approaching and looked for it. He looked for it for thirty-seven years, and at last Sir William Herschel, on March 13, 1781, discovered Uranus!

Sometimes we pray for a thing, and God at once grants our wish and says: "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Matt. 15, 28. Our Savior did that frequently when on earth, as the gospels testify, and He does so frequently now at the right hand of God, as the experience of many Christians amply testifies.

Sometimes we ask for a thing, and God gives it, and much more besides. Solomon asked for an "understanding heart." The Lord answered: "Lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; and I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honor." 1 Kings 3, 6—13. Daniel prayed that God might turn His wrath from His people and bring them out of their captivity. God at once granted this earthly request and also added a spiritual gift, a glorious prophecy concerning the Messiah of Israel. Dan. 9, 23—27. The Prodigal asked to be made as one of the hired servants, but the father received him back as his own well-beloved son. Luke 15, 19—24.

"This is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us." 1 John 5, 14. Luther says: "As your Amen is, so has been your prayer." In Christ's name we say Amen. In Christ all the

promises of God are yea and in Him Amen. 2 Cor. 1, 20. And let all the people say, Amen. Hallelujah! Ps. 106, 48.

"Now, unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." Eph. 3, 20.

"Amen!" the chorus rings
From earth to heaven again;
The universe adoring sings
One blessed, glad "Amen."

In Praise of the Lord's Prayer.

This is called the *Lord's* Prayer because our Lord taught it; the *fatherly* prayer, because it gives to God the sweet name of Father; the *brotherly* prayer, because the word "our" makes us all brethren; the *daily* prayer, for we daily need all things it contains, and hence we ought to pray it daily. Others call it the sun, crown, kernel, essence, of all prayers; a list of all heavenly and earthly gifts; a spring of all goods; an arsenal of all spiritual arms; the mightiest weapon of all saints; the alarm bell of the Church against all enemies; a melodious harp; the true heavenly ladder; the golden hammer to knock at heaven's gates; the main key to God's treasury; the key of paradise. Tertullian calls it the public prayer; Ambrose, the common prayer; Cyprian, "the shortened Gospel"; Georg von Anhalt, "the extract of all psalms"; Channing, "the perfection of the Christian religion." Bossuet said, "Let us always read and reread the Lord's Prayer. It is the true prayer of Christians and the most perfect, for it contains all." Archbishop Leighton exclaimed, "Oh, the spirit of this prayer would make rare Christians!" Richard Baxter said, "The Lord's Prayer, with the Creed and Ten Commandments, the older I grew, furnished me with a most plentiful and acceptable matter for all my meditations."

Count Egmont repeated the Lord's Prayer at his execution, and Emperor Nicholas of Russia summed up his devotions with it on the day of his mortal illness. Sir Matthew Hale's *Contemplations on the Lord's Prayer* were read daily to her household by George Washington's mother in his youth, and they helped form the character of our first President. The Christians of all ages and lands have put the highest estimate upon the Lord's Prayer, and they actually strive for words to give full expression to their unbounded admiration for the same.

The Lord's Prayer is the best prayer —

1. On account of the great Author. If we treat with respect everything coming from the pen of great authors, what must be the reverence with which we regard the prayer coming from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, true God and Man, who is the Wisdom and Power of God, 1 Cor. 1, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Col. 2, 3!

Some critics say this should be called the "Model Prayer" since the "Lord's Prayer" is found in John 17. The criticism seems shallow, for we do not call it the Lord's Prayer because the Lord *prayed* it, but because He *taught* it.

When Pythagoras taught things which his disciples did not understand, they would end all dispute with the words, "He has said it"; in the face of all difficulties the word of the teacher satisfied the scholars. Whatever we may think of

such students over against a human teacher, we must certainly follow their example over against our Lord, the heavenly Teacher, who has taught us the Lord's Prayer. "He has said it." We will reverently say it after Him. St. Cyprian says: "This prayer was made by Him whose words are spirit and life, who has earned for us the Spirit of prayer; should not His words have the power to send the Spirit of grace in abundance on him who prays? This prayer was made by Him who said: "I am the Truth." Should He, who is not a man that He should lie, say anything and not do it? Should He promise and not keep it? Should God not hear the prayer coming from the Truth, He, the faithful God? How can God be won more readily than when He hears His own words? What can melt a father's heart more than to see the petition written by the fingers of His own Child?" And St. Augustine says: "How can we help hoping to win our case when such an Attorney-at-law has drawn up the prayer?" Valerius Herberger in his *Heart Postil*, I, 490, writes: "Some good soul might say, I would like to pray; just tell me what is the best prayer-book and the most powerful prayer. For the best bargain is the best, and the best work is the best. Answer: I will have none despised. The Psalter is good, Habermann's book is good, Daniel's prayer is good; but the Lord's Prayer is the best of all in the whole world, the Master of the learned tongue Himself has made that, and all good prayers flow

out of it and again flow into it. It is brief as to words, but for its quality no money can pay for it. The order is fine, the words are full of heavenly wisdom, the Lord Jesus has purposely aimed it at the heart of His heavenly Father, for He Himself came from His heavenly Father's heart and therefore knows what pleases and what displeases Him. Had He known better and more heart-stirring words, He would not have withheld them from us. The Lord's Prayer is, as it were, a letter of introduction to His heavenly Father from the Lord Jesus, our nearest kith and kin; how could the heavenly Father not love to hear the words which have burst from His dearly beloved Son's most holy heart and flowed from His holy mouth?"

Here Christ's own words express my wants, and now
With perfect confidence to God I pray;
For to the prayer His Son hath taught us, how
Can God the Father answer "nay"?

It is the best prayer —

2. On account of the contents. It contains all we should and may ask for; it takes in all our needs and all the needs of all other men; it asks for what we need for body and soul, for this world and for the world to come; it asks for the giving of good and the hindering of evil, at home and abroad. The Duke of Wellington has well said: "The Lord's Prayer contains the sum total of religion and morals." The Lord's Prayer teaches theology — the doctrine about God, that He is our Father; and it teaches anthropology — the

doctrine about man, that he is our brother. It teaches true humility — the weakness of man; it teaches true faith — the strength of God. Humility — our weakness — teaches us to pray for daily bread, forgiveness of sin, etc.; faith — reliance on God — teaches us to expect Him to satisfy our needs.

It is the best prayer —

3. On account of its beautiful spirit. The filial spirit — “Father”; the brotherly spirit — “Our”; the reverential spirit — “Hallowed be Thy name”; the missionary spirit — “Thy kingdom come”; the obedient spirit — “Thy will be done”; the dependent spirit — “Give us this day our daily bread”; the penitent spirit — “Forgive us our trespasses”; the forgiving spirit — “As we forgive those who trespass against us”; the watchful spirit — “Lead us not into temptation”; the self-distrusting spirit — “But deliver us from evil”; the confident spirit — “For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.”

It is the best prayer —

4. On account of its general character. It is as general as the human race. Time can make no impression on it; it is as good to-day as it was when the Lord gave it centuries ago; it is as good to-day as it will be centuries hence. Place does not modify it; it is as good under the oaks of Europe and America as under the olive-trees of Palestine. Nationality does not affect it; it fits

the nations of highest culture as well as the savages in darkest Africa. It touches every need of every man, in every land, in every age. Man cannot be so deep in poverty, ignorance, and contempt, man cannot be so great in wealth, learning, and social honors as to be outside the reach of the all-embracing Lord's Prayer.

It is the best prayer —

5. On account of its form. It is so plain and simple, yet every word has a world of meaning; the simplest child can pray it, yet the greatest scholar cannot fully understand it; it looks so unpretentious, but there are heights in it we can never scale, depths we can never fathom, breadths we can never measure; we can easily commit it to memory, we can never in this life fully learn it by heart; we can easily repeat it, we can hardly ever pray it in spirit and in truth; in it also a lamb may wade, but an elephant must swim, as Augustine said of the Holy Bible.

The Lord's Prayer naturally cleaves into three parts: the introduction, the seven petitions, and the conclusion.

As on Jacob's ladder the angels of God came down and went up, so in the Lord's Prayer we begin in heaven with "Our Father" and come down to earth, our daily bread, and then, through sin forgiven, temptation overcome, and from evil delivered, we again, in the Doxology, mount up to God in heaven, and thus in a grand sweep the prayer describes a complete circle.

The first three and the last three petitions ask for spiritual gifts, teaching us to pray first and last for the soul's welfare and only, as it were, incidentally and casually for the body's welfare, teaching us the proper value to be placed on the soul in comparison with the value men usually practically place on the body, teaching us to place time and eternity in their proper relations to our daily life on earth, teaching us to place the proper estimate on earth and on heaven.

The first four petitions ask for the giving of good, the last three ask for the removal of evil. The first three petitions agree with the first table of the Ten Commandments, in that they both treat of God and our duties to God; the last four petitions conform to the second table of the Ten Commandments in that they both treat of man and the duties to man. The Fifth Petition refers to the past, the Sixth to the present, the Seventh to the future.

In the First Petition — "Hallowed be Thy name" — we pray for the knowledge and acknowledgment of God; through that the Second Petition — "Thy kingdom come" — is fulfilled: as citizens we enter God's Kingdom of Grace; the following is a necessary step: if we are citizens of God's kingdom, we must, of course, do His will, fulfil the Third Petition. We have in these three petitions the beginning, progress, and end, the basis, effect, and object of our spiritual life, our soul's union with God.

Magister Jacob Thomasius says: "In the Lord's Prayer there is no petition to which you could not give a special name and thus distinguish from the others. That the First Petition is the holiest is clear from the wording: 'Hallowed be Thy name.' The Second: 'Thy kingdom come,' is the most blessed; for if we are now in God's Kingdom of Grace and hereafter in His Kingdom of Glory, we are most blessed. The Third: 'Thy will be done,' is the most difficult, for it is hard to bear when God's will, and not ours, is to be fulfilled in us. On the other hand, the Fourth, about daily bread, is the easiest, for our heart clings to earthly things. The Fifth: 'And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us,' is the most dangerous, as is well known from the parable of the king and his debtor, as well as from Christ's words and other stories. On the other hand, the Sixth: 'Lead us not into temptation,' is the safest; for if we are free from temptation, we are safe. The Seventh: 'Deliver us from evil,' is the most needful, for as long as we live in this evil world, we are head over heels in evil and in misfortunes."

John Bugenhagen, the Pomeranian friend of Luther, asks: *Upon whom do you call in the Lord's Prayer?*

I call upon my heavenly Father; I call upon my dear Brother Jesus Christ; I call upon my Comforter, the blessed Holy Ghost.

With what courage do you do so?

Why, my dear Father bids me: "Call upon Me in the day of trouble"; my dear Brother teaches me to pray; my Comforter, the Holy Ghost, urges me to do so.

With what confidence do you pray?

My dear Father has promised to hear me. My dear Brother has most solemnly assured me, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you.' The Holy Ghost, the Advocate, confirms it and bears witness with my spirit.

What is it you pray for?

The inheritance my Father has willed me, the Brother earned for me, and the Comforter confirmed unto me. Why should I not heartily rejoice over this prayer?

Dr. Finck writes in his *Golden Gem*, page 135: The Lord leads His people according to the Lord's Prayer: 1. Into the treasury, to the riches of His grace and gives them God's favor and mercy, to follow Him their whole life, in that Christ teaches them to pray: 'Our Father which art in heaven.'

2. Out of the treasury He shows them into the decorated court chapel, wherein He shows them His holiness and majesty, in that Christ teaches them to pray: "Hallowed be Thy name."

3. Into His kingdom and royal palace and shows them how He rules from sea to sea, how His servants have power over all devils and to

preach His kingdom, and how He will at some time come to judge the quick and the dead, erecting His kingdom, in the words: "Thy kingdom come."

4. He goes with them into His council chamber and reveals to them what has been decreed from eternity in the council of the adorable holy Trinity, in the words: "Thy will be done."

5. Out of the council chamber He leads them into the kitchen, cellar, and storeroom, gives them to understand He is the Lord of bounty, opening His hand and satisfying the desire of every living thing, in the Fourth Petition: "Give us this day our daily bread."

6. He leads them into His business office, demands an accounting for the ten thousand pounds which He had loaned willingly from His purse, in the Fifth Petition: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."

7. He accompanies them into the armory and gymnasium and gives them weapons wherewith to fight courageously against the enemy, in the Sixth Petition: "And lead us not into temptation."

8. Finally, when they have thus wrestled and fought to the end, He shows them into paradise, takes them from this vale of tears, and leads them into the eternal halls of pleasure, in the Seventh Petition: "Deliver us from evil."

John Arndt, in his Postil, on Rogation Sunday, shows not only how we are thoughtfully to pray the Lord's Prayer, but also how to learn and practise the main Christian duties.

Our Father who art in heaven.

Dearly beloved Father, think of Thy wretched children. Thou art in heaven, in eternal joy, we are in the valley of affliction; but Thou art with us in our need everywhere. (True knowledge of God.)

Hallowed be Thy name.

Dear Father, grant that Thy holy name may be highly prized in the hearts of all men, may be known, honored, praised, and glorified by all men, and that they may all believe on Thee. (Faith.)

Thy kingdom come.

Thy kingdom of grace, righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost preserve in us the hope of eternal life. (Hope.)

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Grant that we heartily love Thee, give us an obedient heart to do Thy will as the angels in heaven, do Thy holy will in us, and make us Thy holy instruments. (Charity.)

Give us this day our daily bread.

Have mercy on our wretched, needy, and mortal body, clothe and preserve it, grant peace and unity, keep us from avarice, grant us a contented heart. (Temperance.)

*And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive
those who trespass against us.*

Cleanse us from our sins with the blood of Jesus Christ, do not remember our sins, grant us a peaceful and forgiving heart. (Righteousness of faith.)

And lead us not into temptation.

Hinder the devil's temptations and avert his fiery arrows, do not permit Satan to fell us, let us not be overcome by Satan, the world, and our flesh. (Christian strength and prudence.)

But deliver us from evil.

Grant us a holy life, a blessed death, and eternal life. Christian perseverance and patience.)

For Thine is the kingdom,

Whereunto Thou hast called us;

And the power,

Whereby we are kept;

And the glory,

Whereunto we are created, redeemed, and sanctified. (Gratitude and confession.)

God grant us grace to appreciate the Lord's Prayer!



Date Due

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The Lord's Prayer

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